

LENIN KRUPSKAIA AND LIBRARIES

EDITED BY S SIMSOVA FLA

**TRANSLATED BY
G PEACOCK BA ALA
AND LUCY PRESCOTT**

This first volume in the *World classics of librarianship*, itself part of a wider project for the publication of international studies in comparative librarianship, is designed as a source book for students of the writings of Lenin, and his wife Nadezhda Krupskaja, about libraries.

Lenin fervently believed in the need for libraries to form one of the main bases for the education of the people, and the translations of his works in this book show the continuity of his concern throughout his political career. He thought deeply about methods and standards of book provision, and drew heavily on the expertise of his wife in education to formulate the policies and decrees which saw the establishment of the modern Russian library system. It is, furthermore, an interesting paradox to read of Lenin's insistence that the methods of the west, and particularly the USA, should be studied as examples on which to base library policy.

The book contains, in addition to translations from Lenin and Krupskaja a section of reminiscences by other writers about them, and a full bibliographical guide to their writings on library matters. Further volumes in this series will be devoted to Nicholas Rubakin, Walter Hofmann and H E Akerknecht. The series should provide a wealth of historical source material for student librarians, as well as interesting glimpses for practising librarians of the origins of their profession in other countries and ages.

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WORLD CLASSICS OF LIBRARIANSHIP

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Introduction

IT IS, perhaps, axiomatic that the quality of a profession is assessed primarily by the quality of the service it gives to the community. Further, the improvement of the service given depends on the continuous refinement of technique and the evolution by the profession of new techniques to satisfy new and developing community needs. In this primary sense, librarianship has since the end of the second world war rapidly begun to justify its claim to professional status.

But the sophistication of technique, the increasing command of the means of giving service, are almost inevitably the result of a self-questioning on the part of the librarian, a self-questioning which, equally inevitably, also extends to the values and aims of the whole profession. And thus there is set in motion a kind of dialectical process (the term comes naturally in an introduction to this book), a fruitful interaction between aims and values on the one hand and means, techniques on the other, in which the horizons and potentialities of each are continuously extended.

In two significant respects librarianship has in recent years demonstrated a new order of professional self-awareness—an increasing interest in its history (and this not simply in pursuit of an intriguing antiquarianism), and a growing concern with librarianship in all countries.

This two-fold extension of professional thought and work, in time and in space, seems to me to find a very proper expression and added impetus in Mrs Simsova's book, the first in the series *World classics of librarianship*. As recently as the early 1950's, reliable material on Russian libraries was in several respects sparse and difficult of access, an inevitable result of the 'cold war' which followed the second world war, but also in some measure due to the lack of interest of librarians outside the USSR. Since that time, however, the easing of travel restrictions, cultural agreements between the USSR and other countries, and a growing realisation of the size and importance of the Soviet library system have resulted in a considerable growth of publication about Soviet libraries, particularly in the United Kingdom and the United States. That the broadly based,

all-penetrating Soviet library system was not created overnight, but was the result of determined development from the earliest days of the revolution of 1917, has become obvious to even a superficial reader of this new literature, but the role of Lenin in this development has been difficult to assess without recourse to material in Russian. These first English translations of some of Lenin's many writings on libraries express well the extraordinary range of interests and powers of initiation and innovation of

‘ *the neat man*

To their East who ordered Gorki to be electrified’ (W H Auden). Mrs Simsova and her translators make possible for many librarians in the English-speaking world valuable insights not only into the beginnings of soviet librarianship, but also an understanding of many of the aims and practices of the contemporary Soviet library system; and, perhaps, a little more understanding and sympathy for Lenin the man and library-user. The account of Lenin's use of the British Museum Library [p. 63] and of national libraries elsewhere in Europe show him to be one of those users most librarians value highly (though it is rarely admitted)—voracious, determined to get what he wants, critical of bureaucracy, but, above all, deeply appreciative and aware of the problems of libraries. The account [p 58] of his respect for library regulations and refusal to accept special favours is matched by his plea (of a type not unknown to most librarians) to Russia's national library (which was later to bear his name). Writing to the then Rumiantsev Museum Library in 1920, Lenin enquired ‘If, according to regulations, reference books cannot be borrowed, could I not be allowed to borrow for reference purposes some books for one evening, say a night, after the library has closed? *I would return them by morning.*’ (*The letters of Lenin*, translated and edited by Elizabeth Hill and Doris Mudie, 1937, 461.) Such tender respect for library regulations must surely be rare in a head of state. But then heads of state with such personal and political interest in developing libraries are also rare.

EDWARD DUDLEY

Part one: Lenin on libraries

Foreword to the first edition of 'What Lenin wrote and said about libraries',

by N K Krupskaja:

THE BUILDING of new mills and factories, the rapid development of 'kolkhozy' and 'sovkhozy', the progress made in eliminating illiteracy, and the emergence of the urban and rural masses have given rise to an extraordinary demand for knowledge. A flood of readers has burst upon libraries, yet there are no books and virtually no library network. The speediest possible growth of librarianship is now a matter of urgency; it is just as important as doing away with illiteracy.

When one reads over Il'ich's [Lenin's] statements on library matters one feels how important and vital they are. Library matters were very near to his heart. He knew from experience how terribly far behind our country was on this front. When in power, Vladimir Il'ich devoted much time to promoting the growth of the library network and equipping it as well as possible.

Lenin's work schedule for February 1921 is typical. It describes how, during a meeting of the Politbureau he read F Dobler's article 'A modern library network' in *Pravda* for 4th February 1921. As he read he made annotations; he underlined the title in blue, adding 'NB'; other notes and underlinings dotted the whole article. Before writing his article 'On the work of the People's Commissariat for Education [Narkompros], Vladimir Il'ich carefully read through a mass of material; [from appropriate government departments] he requested data on the number of libraries in Central Russia and their location, on the numbers of newspapers by provinces and districts. On the basis of the material supplied, he made an analysis of libraries and print distribution agencies, in the course of which he remarked an error in the original information he had received. Vladimir Il'ich also summoned for talks the chief of the library department of the Moscow region, V A Modestov,

whom he questioned for more than an hour on how many libraries and reading rooms were in use; what kind of work went on in them; what the bookstock was like and how it was maintained; what newspapers were taken and what use was made of them; about the staff—who was attracted to this work and how librarians lived. It was his opinion that the library and reading room would for a long time be the main source of political education for the masses and almost their only school.

Nothing, I suppose, suffered so much in the devastation brought by the civil war as libraries. The Whites burned them and commandeered their premises for hospitals. In January 1921 Lenin ordered premises to be handed over to the Academy of Sciences which had formerly belonged to the library but then housed a field hospital. If his intervention was necessary to clear the premises of the Academy of Sciences library, one can imagine the state of ordinary libraries. Libraries had to be purged of narrow-minded and religious books and in the process the shelves of old-established libraries were almost denuded. Private libraries were often simply broken up, because they had been deprived of staff. There was no lack of good intentions [on the part of local authorities], but little common sense. In 1919 in Kazan it was my lot to witness a decision to set up a 'book palace' in one of the best villas, one with plate glass windows. And what did they do? They shut the libraries throughout the whole province and took the books from them to put in the book palace. They intended to classify them by the decimal system, but meanwhile they were tipped into a heap and no one knew what to do with them. When Lenin was told that about a million books lay unsorted in the Rumiantsev library in Moscow (now the Lenin Library), he suggested that volunteer labour be organised, stressing the need for qualified people to do the job.

Librarians in general displayed great selflessness, and largely thanks to them was so much successfully preserved. But the turbulent years of the civil war left their mark on public attitudes to librarianship, and it is not accorded the status that belongs to it.

29th May 1929

Party organisation and party literature:

THE NEW CONDITIONS for social democratic work established in Russia after the October revolution [of 1905] raised the question of party literature. The difference between the illegal and legal

press, that depressing legacy of feudal, autocratic Russia, is beginning to disappear. It has not completely vanished, far from it. The excesses of the hypocritical government of our prime minister are so outrageous that *Izvestiia Soveta Rabochikh Deputatov* [The official organ of the St Petersburg Soviet of Worker Deputies] is printed illegally; but apart from bringing the government into disrepute and striking new moral blows at it, these stupid attempts to suppress what the government is powerless to prevent achieve nothing.

When there was a distinction between the illegal and the legal press the problem of party and non-party press was solved very simply, but it was a very false and unnatural solution. The whole illegal press was a party press. Publishing was organised and run by groups haphazardly joined to groups of active party workers. The whole legal press was non-party—because party activity was under a ban—but it leaned towards one party or another. Unnatural unions, strange marriages, false disguises could not be avoided; the forced reticence of people who wanted to give expression to the party point of view was mixed up with the mental poverty or cowardice of those who hadn't risen to these views and who were not, in fact, party members.

A damnable time of Aesopian speeches, literary servility, slavish language, ideological serfdom! The proletariat has put an end to this infamy under which all that is vital and fresh in Russia has been suffocated. But the proletariat has won as yet only partial freedom for Russia.

The revolution is not yet over. Even if tsarism is no longer capable of defeating the revolution, the revolution is not yet capable of defeating tsarism. And we live in an age when everywhere and in everything is felt this unnatural combination of open, honourable, straightforward, consistent party spirit with underground, hidden, 'diplomatic', evasive 'legality'. This unnatural union tells on our newspaper too. However many jokes Mr Guchkov makes about social-democratic tyranny suppressing the publication of liberal-bourgeois, moderate newspapers, all the same it remains a fact that the central organ of the Russian Social Democratic Labour Party, *Proletarii*, is still excluded from autocratic, police-state Russia.

However that may be, this incomplete revolution makes us all apply ourselves immediately to ordering affairs differently. Literature may now be, even when 'legally published', nine tenths party literature. Literature ought to become party literature. In contrast to bourgeois customs, in contrast to the bourgeois, private enterprise mercenary press, in contrast to bourgeois liter-

ary careerism and individualism, to 'aristocratic anarchism' and the urge to make a profit, the socialist proletariat ought to emphasise the principle of party literature, to develop this principle and apply it in its fullest and most perfect form.

What in essence is this principle of party literature? It is not only that for the socialist proletariat literary activity cannot be a profit making device for individuals or groups; it cannot be a private matter at all, cannot be divorced from the common cause of the proletariat. Down with non-party writers! Down with literary supermen! Literature ought to become a part of the common cause of the proletariat, the gear wheel and screw of the great social democratic mechanism activated by all the forward looking elements in the whole working class. Literature ought to become an integral part of organised, planned, and united social democratic party work.

'Every comparison leaves much to be desired' runs the German proverb. My comparison of literature with a screw, the comparison of a living movement with a piece of machinery, leaves much to be desired, too. I suppose there will always be found hysterical intellectuals who will raise cries of protest against such a comparison on the grounds that it degrades, stifles, 'bureaucratizes' free ideological conflict, freedom of criticism, freedom of literary creativity, etc, etc. In fact, such cries would be only an expression of bourgeois intellectual individualism. It goes without saying that literature least of all things lends itself to mechanical direction or levelling, to the majority lording it over the minority. It goes without saying that in this matter it is absolutely essential to afford wide scope for personal initiative and individual preferences, scope for thought and fantasy, form and content. None of this is in dispute, but it all shows that the literary side of proletarian party activity cannot automatically be identified with its other aspects. All this by no means disproves the argument, so foreign and strange to the bourgeoisie and bourgeois democracy, that literature ought to become beyond doubt and of necessity a part of social democratic party work, firmly bound up with the other parts. Newspapers ought to become organs of various party organisations. Men of letters certainly ought to join party organisations. Publishing houses and warehouses, shops and reading rooms, libraries—the whole trade in books ought to become a party affair and accountable to the party. An organised socialist proletariat ought to keep watch on all this work, control it all, direct onto it without a single exception the life-breath of the living proletarian cause, so cutting the ground from under the old semi-

Oblomovian, semi-small-shopkeeper Russian principle: writing is the writer's job, reading the reader's.

We do not say, obviously, that this reorganisation of literature, which has been polluted by Asiatic censorship and European bourgeoisie, can take place at once. It is not at all our intention to preach any uniform system or that the problem can be solved by a few decrees. No, in this field standardisation is quite out of the question. What is needed is for the whole of our party, the whole confessed social democratic proletariat throughout Russia, to be aware of this new problem, put it in a clear perspective and everywhere make efforts to solve it. Escaping from the bondage of feudal censorship, we do not want to fall, and we shall not fall, into the bondage of bourgeois-shopkeeper literary ways. We want to build, and we shall build, a free press, free not only from police interference, but also free from capital, free from careerism—and more: free from bourgeois-anarchist individualism.

These last words will seem a paradox, or a mockery of readers. What! some intellectual, some passionate defender of freedom may cry. What! you want public control of such a subtle, individual thing as literature! You want the workers to decide questions of science, philosophy, aesthetics, by a show of hands! You are denying the absolute freedom of absolutely individual, ideological, creative work!

Rest assured, gentlemen! In the first place what is involved is party literature and its subjection to party control. Anyone is free to write and say whatever he wants without the slightest restriction. But every voluntary organisation (including parties) is free to expel those members who use the party for spreading anti-party views. Freedom of speech and of the press must be complete. But the freedom of associations must be complete too. I am obliged, in the name of freedom of speech, to permit you every right to shout, lie, and write whatever you wish. But you must grant me, in the name of freedom of association, the right to join with or break away from people taking this line or that. A party is a voluntary union which would inevitably fall apart, at first ideologically, and then physically, if it did not purge itself of members who put forward anti-party views. To determine the limits between the party and the anti-party view there is the party programme, the tactical resolutions of the party and its rules, and lastly, all the experience of social democracy, of the international voluntary organisations of the proletariat: the proletariat which has constantly introduced into its parties individual elements and trends not altogether consistent, not alto-

gether Marxist, not altogether correct, but which has also constantly undertaken periodic party purges. So it will be with us within the party, you gentlemen who advocate bourgeois 'freedom of criticism': now our party is becoming in one bound a mass movement, now we are experiencing the sharp transition to an open organisation, now inevitably many people whose views are inconsistent (from the Marxist point of view), will be joining us, perhaps even a few Christians, perhaps even a few mystics. We have strong stomachs, we are hard-as-rock Marxists. We will digest the inconsistency of these people. Freedom of thought and freedom of criticism within the party will never make us forget about the freedom to form voluntary organisations of people called parties.

Secondly, you bourgeois individualistic gentlemen, we have to tell you that your talk about absolute freedom is a piece of hypocrisy. In a society based on the power of money, in a society where the labouring masses live in poverty and a handful of rich live like parasites, there can be no real or effective freedom. Are you free from your bourgeois publisher, Mr Writer, from your bourgeois public, which demands from you pornography in words and pictures, and prostitution as 'supplements' to 'sacred' scenic art? This absolute freedom is a bourgeois or an anarchist phrase (for, as a view of the world, anarchism is only bourgeois values turned inside out). It is impossible to live in society and be free from society. The freedom of the bourgeois writer, artist, actress, is only a disguised (or hypocritically disguised) dependence on the money bag, on corruption, on immoral earnings.

And we socialists expose this hypocrisy, tear down false placards—not in order to attain a classless literature and art (this will be possible only in a socialist, classless society), but to confront a deceptively free literature which is in reality tied to the bourgeoisie with a literature which is really free, and openly linked with the proletariat.

It will be a free literature because the idea of socialism and fellow-feeling with the workers rather than the chance of profit or a career will recruit more and more forces to its ranks. It will be free literature because it will serve not an over-fed heroine, not the bored 'upper ten thousand' who suffer from obesity but the millions and tens of millions of workers who are the flower of the country, its strength, its future. It will be free literature, bringing to fruition the last word of the revolutionary thought of mankind by the experience and living work of the socialist proletariat, creating a lasting dialogue between the experience of

the past (scientific socialism, completing the development of socialism from its primitive, utopian forms) and the experience of the present (the present struggle of our worker comrades).

To work then, comrades! Before us is a difficult and new task, but a great one fraught with gratitude—to organise a wide, many-sided, varied literature indissolubly joined to the social democratic worker movement. All social democratic literature must become party literature. All newspapers, journals, publishing houses, and so on, must immediately undertake reorganisation, creating such a situation that they each according to their nature will fall wholly under the control of one party organisation or another. Only then will 'social democratic' literature become such in reality, only then will it be able to fulfil its role, only then will it be able, even within the confines of bourgeois society, to break free from bondage to the bourgeoisie, and link up with the movement of the really advanced, out-and-out revolutionary class.

'Novaia zhizn'' (12) 13th November 1905. Signed N Lenin

What can be done for public education:

IN WESTERN COUNTRIES a number of unhealthy prejudices are widespread from which Holy Mother Russia is free. There, for example, they hold that great public libraries, with hundreds of thousands and millions of books, ought not to be the property only of the scholars and pseudo-scholars who use them. There they have dedicated themselves to the strange, incomprehensible, barbaric aim of making these great, these immense libraries accessible not only to scholars, professors and other specialists like them, but to the masses, the crowds, the man in the street.

What a profane use of librarianship! What a lack of that 'good order' we take such a justifiable pride in. Instead of rules discussed and elaborated by dozens of official committees, thinking up hundreds of petty restriction on the use of books, they take care that even children can use rich book collections; they are anxious for readers to read books bought at public expense in their own homes; they see the pride and glory of the public library not in the number of rarities it possesses, not in the sixteenth century printed books or tenth century manuscripts, but in the extent to which books circulate among the people, the number of new readers enrolled, the speed with which requests for books are satisfied, the number of books issued for home reading, the number of children enrolled as readers and library users . . . Strange prejudices are spread abroad in western countries, and it is a cause for rejoicing that in their concern for us our

superiors guard us with care and consideration from the influence of these prejudices, shielding our rich public libraries from the mob and the rabble.

Before me lies the report of the New York Public Library for 1911.

In that year the New York Public Library moved from two antiquated buildings to a new one built by the city. The total stock is now about two million volumes. It happened that the first book asked for from the reading room was in Russian. This was a work of N Grot: *Moral ideals of our time*. The call slip for the book was handed in at 9.8 a.m. The book was delivered to the reader at 9.15 a.m.

During the year 1,658,376 people visited the library, 246,950 readers used the reading room, and 911,891 books were issued.

But this is only a small part of the turnover of books in the library. Not many people can visit the library to read. The proper organisation of educational matters is measured by the number of books issued for home reading, by the facilities available to the majority of the population.

The New York Public Library has forty-two branches, and will soon have forty-three in the New York districts of Manhattan, Bronx, and Richmond (which have a total population of almost three million). It is a matter of policy that every inhabitant should have within half a mile of his home—that is, under ten minutes' walk away—a branch of the public library, serving as the focal point of every kind of institution and organisation in the field of public education.

In 1911 almost eight million—7,914,882—volumes were lent for home reading, four hundred thousand more than in 1910. For each hundred of the population of all ages and both sexes, 267 books were issued for home reading during the year.

Each of the forty-two branch libraries not only provides facilities for consulting reference works on the spot, and for borrowing, but is also a place where evening lectures, public meetings, and cultural entertainments can take place.

New York Public Library has about 15,000 books in Eastern languages, about 20,000 in Yiddish, and about 16,000 in Slavonic languages. In the main reading room there are about 20,000 volumes on open access, for the use of everyone.

For children the New York Public Library has built a special central reading room, and is gradually opening others in the branches. The staff are concerned to provide every facility for children, and supply them with information. Children borrowed a total of 2,859,888 volumes, a little short of three million (and

more than a third of the total issue). The number of children visiting the reading room was 1,120,915.

As far as the loss of books is concerned, New York Public Library estimates losses as 70-90 per 100,000 books issued on loan.

This is the position in New York. And in Russia?

Rabochaia pravda (5) 18th July 1913.
Signed W. Written at a time when Lenin
lived in Cracow near to the Russian
border and published a number of
articles on public education in Russian
papers

Book review of N A Rubakin's 'Among books' [Sredi knig]:

A LARGE VOLUME of 930 pages on large paper and with very small print, partly in double columns, aiming to be 'a review of Russian book resources in relation to the history of scientific, philosophical, literary and social ideas'. So much is mentioned in the sub-title.

In content this second volume under review deals with various fields in the social sciences. It includes among other things socialism in western Europe and in Russia. It is scarcely necessary to say that a publication like this is of absorbing interest and that the author's plan is in the main a good one. In fact it is impossible to make a satisfactory 'review of Russian book resources' or a 'reference handbook' for self-instruction and for library use, otherwise than in the context of the history of ideas. Here we require 'preparatory remarks' to each section (which the author gives) with a general review of the subject and a precise exposition of each trend of thought, and then a list of the literature relevant to that section and to each current of thought.

The author and his many assistants, mentioned in the preface, have expended vast effort, and have begun an extremely valuable work, and it must be our heartfelt wish to see it grow and develop in breadth and depth. Among its particularly valuable features is that the author does not exclude foreign books or publications which have incurred prosecution. No good library should be without Mr Rubakin's work.

The shortcomings of the book are the author's eclecticism and failure fully to avail himself of the cooperation of specialists in specific fields. (It is more correct to say that he has scarcely made a beginning in this.)

The first fault comes perhaps from the author's curious aversion to 'polemics'. In the preface Mr Rubakin writes 'I have

never taken part in polemics in my life, holding that in the vast majority of cases polemics is one of the best means of obscuring truth behind all kinds of human emotion'. The author doesn't suspect, in the first place, that without human emotion there was never, is not and cannot be any human search for truth. The author forgets, secondly, that he is setting out to review the 'history of ideas' and the history of ideas is the history of change and consequently of the conflict of ideas.

It must be one or the other: either refuse to recognise that there is a conflict of ideas, in which case it would be somewhat difficult to study its history (leaving aside the question of involvement in the conflict); or give up claiming 'never to take part in polemics'. I open the book, for example, at Mr Rubakin's 'preliminary remarks' on the theory of political economy, and see at once that the author escapes the dilemma I have mentioned, firstly, by disguised polemics (a form of polemics having all the shortcomings of polemics without any of its great merits), and secondly, by using eclecticism as a defence.

Dealing with Bogdanov's 'Short course', Mr Rubakin 'permits himself' to note the 'interesting' analogy of one of the 'marxist' author's conclusions with 'N K Mikhailovskii's [a literary critic and prominent ideologue of narodism] well-known formula for progress' (p 815) [of *Sredi knig*].

Oh, Mr Rubakin, you who say: 'I have never taken part in polemics in my life'! . . .

The preceding page extols the 'strictly scientific approach, the deep analysis and critical treatment of very important theories' . . . of guess whom! —the arch-eclecticist Mr Tugan-Baranovskii! [an economist and critic of marxism] . . . Mr Rubakin must be aware that the professor is part supporter of marxism, part supporter of narodism, part supporter of 'the theory of marginal utility', but none the less he calls him a 'socialist'. [The theory of marginal utility was advanced by the Austrian school at the end of the nineteenth century in opposition to the Marxist theory of labour value.] Surely to write such a monstrous thing is tantamount to engaging in polemics of the worst kind against socialism?

If Mr Rubakin had divided by four the 80,000 or more letters (that is a whole pamphlet) which he wrote as an introduction to the literature of political economy, and given them to, say, a Black-hundred man, a liberal, a narodnik and a marxist, then there would have been a more open polemic, and 999 readers out of 1,000 would have found the truth a thousand times more easily and quickly.

Mr Rubakin has employed similar tactics—engaging the cooperation of representatives of ‘polemics’—in discussing bolshevism and menshevism, devoting half a page each to L Martov [a menshevik leader] and myself. As far as I am concerned I am very pleased with L Martov’s exposition, for example, with his recognition that liquidationism leads to attempts ‘to form an open workers’ party’ and to ‘a negative attitude to underground organisations still in existence’ (*pp* 771-772), or with his recognition that ‘menshevism did not see any possibility of the proletariat taking a fruitful part in the crisis’ (*ie* the crisis of 1905), ‘apart from cooperating with the bourgeois liberal democracy in its attempts to deprive the reactionary section of the property-owning classes of their power in the state—cooperation which, however, the proletariat had to afford while maintaining full political independence’ (*p* 772).

As soon as Mr Rubakin begins to take an independent line in his description of menshevism, errors crop up. For example, he asserts that Aksel’rod [a menshevik leader] together with Plekhanov [a marxist philosopher] ‘gave up’ liquidationism (*p* 772). Without imputing any special blame to Mr Rubakin for errors like these, initially unavoidable in a work of such variety and drawing on so many sources, one can only wish that the author had employed more often the method of enlisting the services of experts in the various trends in all fields of learning. The result of this method is a gain in accuracy and completeness of a work, and its objectivity too; the only loss is in eclecticism and disguised polemics.

‘Prosveshchenie’ (4) April 1914. Signed V I

On the role of the St Petersburg public library:

STUDY IS ESSENTIAL for intelligent, thoughtful and successful participation in the revolution.

Library affairs in St Petersburg, by virtue of the damage done to public education by tsarism over many years, have been reduced to a sorry state.

It is essential to carry out immediately and unconditionally the following fundamental reorganisation, based on principles long in existence in the free countries of the west, particularly in Switzerland and the United States of North America:

1 The public library (formerly the Imperial library) should immediately institute a system for the exchange of books with all the libraries supported at public expense in Petrograd and in the province, and with foreign libraries (in Finland, Sweden and other countries).

2 The sending of books from library to library must be made post free by law.

3 The library reading room must be kept open, as it is done in civilised countries in private libraries and reading rooms for the rich, daily, not excluding holidays and Sundays, from 8 a.m. to 11 p.m.

4 The requisite number of staff must be transferred immediately to the public library from departments of the Ministry of Public Information (making more provision for female labour, in view of the military demand for men); as nine tenths of the staff in these departments are engaged not only on useless but on harmful work.

*Written November 1917. First published in 1933 in
'Leninskii sbornik' 21*

To the People's Commissariat for Education [Narkompros]:

PLEASE PASS ON to your library departments (both for adult education and for state libraries etc) my further suggestions, set out below, on the question recently raised in the Council of People's Commissars [Sovnarkom or SNK], and inform me of your conclusions, and of those of the respective departments, on this topic.

Libraries in general, including of course 'reading-huts', all kinds of reading rooms, etc, more than anything else need the stimulus of rivalry between separate guberniias, groups, reading rooms, and so on.

A proper system for making statistical returns, which the SNK has now demanded, should serve three purposes:

- 1 to acquaint both the soviet government and all citizens about what is being done, accurately and fully;
- 2 to enlist public help in the work;
- 3 to stimulate competition among library staffs.

To this end it is essential to draw up at once suitable lists and forms for statistical returns.

In my opinion lists should be prepared centrally, and then reprinted in each guberniia, and distributed to all public education departments and to all libraries, reading rooms, clubs, etc.

The layout of these lists ought to show, say, in bold print, the obligatory questions, refusal to answer which would render heads of libraries etc answerable to a court of law. Then after these obligatory questions would come a very large number of optional queries (in the sense that refusal to answer would not automatically involve prosecution).

Compulsory questions should be, for example: The address of

the library (reading room, etc), the name of the head, and of his management committee, with their addresses, the number of books and newspapers, opening times (and other questions where the library is a large one).

Optional questions ought to cover all the improvements put into practice in Switzerland and America and elsewhere, so that it will be possible to reward those who have successfully introduced the largest number of improvements by making awards of valuable books, collections, etc.

For example: 1 Can you give exact figures to show the growth in book turnover in your library? or 2 the use made of your reading room? or 3 the exchange of books and newspapers with other libraries and reading rooms? or 4 the compilation of a central catalogue? or 5 use of the library on Sundays? and 6 in the evenings? or 7 enrolment of new categories of readers, women, children, non-Russians, etc? or 8 the reference service to readers? or 9 simple and practical methods of storing books and newspapers and conserving them? Mechanical methods of getting the book to the reader and returning it to the shelves? or 10 loans for home reading? or 11 the simplification of the system of guarantees for home loans? or 12 for sending books through the post?

And so on, and so on.

There would be merit awards for the best returns and the best improvements.

The returns of the Library Department of the Narkompros must inform the SNK the number of returns received each month, and of the questions to which answers are given: and of the totals.

*Written February 1919. Refers to
Lenin's question on the library
service raised at a meeting of the
Council of People's Commissars
on 30th January 1919.
First published 1933*

*First all Russian conference on adult education 6th-19th May
1919. Speech of welcome 6th May:*

COMRADES, I AM very glad to welcome this conference on adult education. Of course, you will not expect from me a speech which would treat the subject in depth, since comrade Lunacharskii, the preceding speaker, who is well versed in it and has made it his special study, has already done so. Allow me simply to say a few words of greeting and make some observations and reflections which came to me when the Council of People's Commissars

touched more or less closely on the work you have to hand. I am convinced that you will not find a field of soviet activity where such resounding success has been achieved in eighteen months as in adult education. Undoubtedly work in this field has been easier for us and for you than in others. Here we have had to brush aside old stumbling blocks and old hindrances. Here it was easier to meet the tremendous demand for knowledge, for free education, for free development, for which most of all the worker and peasant masses were clamouring. If as a result of a mighty pressure from the masses, it was easier to remove the external obstacles which stood in their path, to break up the historical bourgeois institutions which forced us into the imperialist war and condemned Russia to the very heavy burdens which followed on that war, if it was easier for us to remove external obstacles, nevertheless it was strongly borne in on us how heavy was the work of re-educating the masses, of organising and teaching, of disseminating knowledge, of combating the darkness, ignorance, barbarity, and savagery which we inherited. Here we had to wage war by quite different methods. Here we could only count on the long-standing success, and the stalwart systematic influence of the advanced sections of the community which met with ready acceptance from the masses, though we are often guilty of doing less than we are able. In these first steps towards providing adult education which is free and untrammelled by old boundaries and conditions and which meets the demands of the adult population it seems to me that in this field we had at first to combat a double obstacle. Both obstacles we inherited from the old, capitalist society, which even now grips us and drags us down with thousands and millions of threads, ropes and chains.

The first obstacle was the excessive number of bourgeois intellectuals, who looked on the re-orientated educational institutions for peasants and workers as the most suitable arena for their own personal theories in philosophy or culture, when the most stupid attitudes were propounded as something new, and the supernatural and absurd was offered under the guise of purely proletarian art and proletarian culture. [This refers to the anti-marxist views of A Bogdanov and others spread in the Proletcult (Proletarian Culture) organisation.] But in the early days this was natural and perhaps excusable, and the movement at large cannot be faulted, and I hope that ultimately we shall be successful in throwing all this off.

The second obstacle was also a legacy from capitalism. The masses of petty bourgeois workers who were struggling for educa-

tion, while they destroyed the old order, were unable to construct any organising or organised body. I observed this when the Council of People's Commissars raised the question of mobilising literate people, and the question of the library department, and from these observations I realised how bad the situation was. Of course in speeches of welcome one does not often speak about bad things. I hope that you will be free from these conventions and will not take offence if I share with you some of my depressing observations. When we discussed mobilising literate people, the thing which struck me most was that our revolution had achieved brilliant success without escaping entirely from the pattern of a bourgeois revolution. It gave freedom of development to the forces that were available, but these forces were petty-bourgeois, with the same old slogan 'each for himself, and God for all', the same accursed capitalist slogan leading to nothing but Kolchak and bourgeois restoration. When you look what is being done to teach the illiterate I think that very little has been done, and our main task here is to grasp that the organisation of the proletarian elements is essential. There is no place for ridiculous paper manifestos, but for real measures, which the people need to have now, and which would make every literate person to consider it a duty to teach one or two illiterates. This is envisaged in our decree. [Decree on 'The mobilisation of the literate and the organisation of propaganda of the Soviet system' issued by the Council of People's Commissars on 10th December 1918.] In this field, however, scarcely a thing has been done.

When I touched on another problem in the Council of People's Commissars, the library problem, I said that the complaints which were continually being made about the fault lying in our industrial backwardness, our lack of books and inability to produce them in sufficient quantity, I said to myself that these complaints were justified. Of course we have no fuel, our factories stand idle, there is little paper and we cannot produce books. This is all true, but it is also true that we cannot get at the books which we do possess. In this matter we continue to suffer from peasant naivety, peasant lack of initiative. When the peasant robbed his lord's library, he ran home and was afraid that someone would come and take the books off him, because the thought never occurred to him that there could be any redistribution that was just, that state property could be anything other than an odious thing, that state property could be the common property of workers and working men. The untutored peasant masses are not to blame over this, and as far as the development of the revolution is concerned, this is quite lawful,

it is an unavoidable stage; and, when the peasant took a library for himself and kept it in his house out of sight of other people, he could not behave in any other way, because he did not understand that it was possible to unite the libraries of Russia, that there would be enough books to satisfy the literate and teach the illiterate. Now we must combat the remnants of disorganisation, chaos and ridiculous departmental wrangles. This must form our main task. We must apply ourselves to the straightforward and urgent matter of mobilising literate people and combating illiteracy. We must make use of the books which we have, and undertake the job of organising a network of libraries which will help the people to use every book at our disposal; we must not build parallel organisations, but one unified and planned organisation. In this small matter is represented a basic aim of our revolution. If it fails to solve this problem, if it does not build a really well planned and unified organisation to replace our Russian muddle headed chaos and absurdity, then this revolution will remain a bourgeois revolution, because the basic characteristic of a proletarian revolution which is on the road to communism is this. The bourgeoisie thought it enough to break down the old order and give a free hand to peasant farming, which revived the same kind of capitalism which had appeared in all the preceding revolutions.

If we are called a party of communists, we must understand that only now, when we have overcome external obstacles and destroyed old institutions, only now are we faced in a real way with the fundamental task of a genuine proletarian revolution—that of organising tens and hundreds of millions of people. After eighteen months' experience in this field, which has been the experience of all of us, we must at last set our feet on the right road which will bring victory over that lack of education, ignorance and barbarity from which we have suffered so long. (Stormy applause.)

*Published 1919 in the pamphlet:
N Lenin 'Two speeches to the first
all-Russian conference on adult
education' (Moscow)*

The work of the People's Commissariat for Education [Narkompros]

Pravda 25 of February 5 carried 'Instructions of the central committee of the Russian communist party to communists working in the Narkompros (in connection with the reorganisation of the commissariat)'.
'

It is unfortunate that there is a misprint in the first point which changes the sense of it: 'political' instead of 'polytechnical' education is used three times.

I wish to bring these instructions to the attention of our comrades and to seek an exchange of views on several of the more important points.

In December 1920, the party held a conference on national education. 134 delegates with powers to speak and vote attended, and twenty nine for discussion only. They met for five days. An account of the proceedings is given in a *Supplement to the bulletin of the eighth congress of soviets on the party conference on questions of national education* (published by the VTSIK January 10 1921). The conference resolutions, the proceedings, and, with the exception of the introductory article of comrade Lunacharskii and the one by comrade Grinko, all the articles in the *Supplement to the bulletin* mentioned above show a wrong approach to polytechnical education. The central committee's instructions draw the special attention of the people's commissar and the collegium to combating a fondness for general arguments and abstract slogans. This is the very defect from which the publications suffer.

In general, the question of polytechnical education has been settled by the section dealing with mass education in our party programme, paragraphs 1 and 8. These are the paragraphs referred to in the central committee's instructions. Paragraph 1 deals with polytechnical education up to the age of seventeen; and paragraph 8 deals with 'the extensive development of vocational training together with general polytechnical education from the age of seventeen upwards'.

So, the party programme states the matter clearly. These arguments about 'polytechnical or monotekhnicheskii education' (however ridiculous these words that I have put in quotes may be, they are the actual words that appear on page four of the *Supplement*) are basically wrong and should never be entertained by a communist; they show up his ignorance of the programme and a lazy attachment to trite phrases. While we are temporarily forced to lower the age from seventeen to fifteen (for the transition from general polytechnical education to vocational polytechnical training) the 'party must consider' this lowering of the age as an 'exception' (Point one of the central committee's instructions), as a practical necessity, as a temporary measure forced upon us by the 'poverty and devastation of the country'.

We may not have many able people with both knowledge and practical teaching experience, but at least we have some. Our

weakness is in failing to find them, put them into the right executive positions, and share in their study of the practical development of the soviet state. This is exactly where the party conference of December 1920 failed, and if a conference of 163 educational workers failed—I repeat, one hundred and sixty-three—it is very plain that there is some general basic fault in our dealings with this question, and this made it necessary for the party's central committee to issue special instructions.

In the commissariat for education there are two, and only two, comrades who have special duties. They are comrade Lunacharskii, the people's commissar, who gives general oversight, and comrade Pokrovskii, the deputy commissar, whose first duty is to deputise for the commissar in general oversight, and secondly, to act as official adviser (and director) on science and Marxism generally. Both comrade Lunacharskii and comrade Pokrovskii are well known to all the party, and there is no question that in this respect both are in their own way, 'specialists' within the Narkompros. None of the other commissariat staff can afford to 'specialise' like this: they must 'specialise' in skilfully recruiting the best teachers, in making the best use of them, and systematically applying what has been learned by practical experience. This is dealt with in points two, three and five of the central committee's instructions.

The party workers' conference ought to have had reports from experts—teachers with at least ten years' experience behind them—who could have told us such things as what is being done and what has been done in particular fields, vocational training, for example; how we, as a soviet state, deal with it; what results have been achieved, and examples (surely some could be found, however few). What are the main faults, and how these could be eliminated; and all this set out in plain language.

Instead, the party workers' conference had no such account of actual work done, and listened to no teachers on their practical experience; yet it made fatuous attempts to draw general conclusions and assess things in trite phrases. The whole party and all the staff of the Narkompros must recognise this fault and we must make a united effort to put things right. Workers should exchange their experiences at a local level and assist the party in giving prominence to the exemplary guberniias, uedzy, districts, educational institutions, or skilled teachers who have achieved good results in a relatively narrow, local or specialised sphere. Taking as our starting point those results which have been tested by practical experience, we must go forward, and, after checking carefully, apply these local successful develop-

ments nationally, promoting talented, or merely able, teachers to more serious posts, giving them wider responsibilities etc.

The real test of a communist's work in educational matters (or institutions) ought to be his ability to recruit specialists, to find them, to exploit their knowledge, to persuade expert teachers to work with the party leadership, to check up on what is being done and on what scale.

As long as the Narkompros remains full of people claiming to give 'communist leadership', and at the same time is completely void of practical knowledge, is short of, or entirely lacks practical specialists, and fails to promote such as there are, to listen to what they can contribute or profit from their experience, we shall not move forward.

Here is the genuine communist leader: one who will compile a good textbook, distilled from the curricula of experienced teachers, and, in a practical way, will improve on, if only slightly, the content and conditions of the work of a score, a hundred or a thousand experts. But there is little value in the communist who has a lot to say about 'leadership', yet is incapable of recruiting specialists to participate in practical experiments, of encouraging them to produce practical achievements in their work, and exploiting the practical experience thus gained by hundreds of teachers.

It is plain from skimming through that fine pamphlet *The people's commissariat for education, October 1917-October 1920: brief report* that this is the chief weakness of the Narkompros. Comrade Lunacharskii admits as much in the preface (*p* 5) when he mentions 'the noticeable lack of a practical approach'. But it is going to take a lot more effort to drive this home to all the communists of the Narkompros and make them put these home truths into practice. This pamphlet reveals that our knowledge of the facts is hopelessly inadequate; we do not know how to compile them; we do not know what questions to ask or how many replies we can expect to receive (taking into account our cultural level, our traditions, and the means of communication available). We do not know how to assemble evidence of practical experience and assess it. We treat ourselves to vain 'general arguments and trite phrases', but do not know how to make good use of our able teachers generally, nor, particularly, our competent engineers and agronomists in technical education. We do not know how to use factories, state farms, reasonably well organised schemes and electric power stations for the purpose of polytechnical education.

In spite of these failings, the soviet republic is advancing in mass education; that is quite certain. There is a tremendous demand for enlightenment and knowledge 'at the bottom', I mean among the working masses who under capitalist rule were cheated hypocritically or prevented by the overt use of force from having an education. We can take pride in the fact that we are responsible for this movement and are encouraging it. But it would be criminal to ignore the faults in our work and our failure to learn how we can master the state machinery of education.

Then look at the question of the distribution of newspapers and books, dealt with in the last point (number seven) of the Central Committee's instructions.

On November 3 1920 the Council of People's Commissars issued a decree on 'The centralisation of libraries' [*see p 40*] (*p 439*), *Collection of statutes 87 1920*) envisaging the creation of a single network of libraries of the Russian Soviet Federated Socialist Republic.

Here are some of the details I have been able to obtain on this topic from comrade Malkin of the Central Administration for the Distribution of Printed Materials [Tsentropechat'] and from comrade Modestov of the library section of the Moscow Department of Education.

The distributions of libraries in central Soviet Russia (excluding Siberia and North Caucasus) through thirty eight guberniias [provinces], 305 uedzy [districts] was as follows

Central libraries	342
District, urban libraries	521
Volost libraries	4,474
Mobile libraries	1,661
Reading huts	14,739
Miscellaneous (rural, juvenile, reference, libraries of various institutions and organisations)	12,203
	<hr/>
Total	33,940
	<hr/>

From experience, comrade Modestov estimates that there are actually about three quarters of this number; the rest exist only on paper. For Moscow Guberniia, the Tsentropechat' quotes 1,223 libraries, while comrade Modestov's figure is 1,018; 204 of these are in the city proper and 814 in the guberniia, excluding the trade union libraries (probably about sixteen) and the army libraries (about 125).

As far as one can judge by comparing the figures for the different guberniias, they are not very reliable—let us hope the actual figure is not even less than seventy five per cent! For example, in Viatka Guberniia, there are 1,703 reading huts, in Vladimir Guberniia thirty seven, in St Petersburg Guberniia ninety eight, in Ivanovo-Voznesensk Guberniia seventy five, etc. Of the 'miscellaneous' libraries, thirty six are in St Petersburg Guberniia, 378 in Voronezh Guberniia, 525 in Ufa Guberniia, thirty one in Pskov Guberniia, and so on.

It would appear from these figures that there is a tremendous thirst for knowledge among the masses of workers and peasants, and that the struggle for education and the setting up of libraries is powerful and 'popular' in the true sense of the word. But we remain sadly lacking in the power to channel, control, mould and satisfy this popular demand in the right way. There is still a great deal to be done towards creating a really integrated network of libraries.

How are we distributing the newspapers and books? According to the administration's figures for eleven months of 1920, we distributed 401 million copies of newspapers and 14 million books. Here are the figures for three newspapers (12th January 1921) as compiled by the periodicals section of the Central Administration for the Distribution of Printed Materials. (Figures represent thousands of copies.)

	<i>Izvestiia</i>	<i>Pravda</i>	<i>Bednota</i>
Branches of the 'Tsentropechat' Military bureau for the supply of literature and newspapers to divisional dispatch offices	191	139	183
Railway organisations, railway department, 'Tsentropechat' and agitation centres	50	40	85
Offices and organisations in the city of Moscow	30	25	16
Commandant of the city of Moscow	65	35	8
Supplies for passenger trains	8	7	6
Public reading stands and files	1	1	1
	5	3	1
	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>
	350	250	300
	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>

The number for the public reading stands (that is the really mass circulation) is amazingly small. The figures for the official departments, etc in the capital are amazingly large. It would seem that papers are grabbed by soviet bureaucrats, military and civil, and bureaucratically used by them.

Here are a few more figures taken from the reports of the local branches of the Tsentropechat'.

In September 1920 the Voronezh Guberniia branch received twelve days' newspapers (*ie* none on eighteen of the thirty days of September). Those received were distributed as follows:

To branches of the Tsentropechat':

	<i>Izvestiia</i>	<i>Pravda</i>	<i>Bednota</i>
Uezd	4,986	4,020	4,310
District	7,216	5,860	10,064
Volost	3,370	3,200	4,285
Party organisations	447	569	3,880
Soviet establishments	1,765	1,641	509

(Note that soviet establishments received nearly three times as many copies of *Pravda* as party organisations!)

Then follow:

	<i>Izvestiia</i>	<i>Pravda</i>	<i>Bednota</i>
Agitation and educational department of the military commissariat	5,532	5,793	12,332
Agitation centres	352	400	593
Reading huts	nil	nil	nil
Subscribers	7,167	3,080	764

So, 'subscribers' (in fact, 'soviet bureaucrats', of course) received a good slice.

Public reading stands	460	508	500
Totals:	<u>32,517</u>	<u>25,104</u>	<u>37,237</u>

In November 1920 Ufa Guberniia received twenty five deliveries (*ie* only on five days were there none), distributed thus:

	<i>Izvestiia</i>	<i>Pravda</i>	<i>Bednota</i>
Party organisations	113	1,572	153
Soviet establishments	2,763	1,296	1,267
Agitation and educational department of the military commissariat	687	470	6,500
Volost executive committees	903	308	3,511
Reading huts	36	8	2,538
Subscribers	nil	nil	nil
' various uyezdy organisations '	1,044	219	991
Totals:	<u>5,841</u>	<u>4,069</u>	<u>15,429</u>

Finally, the report for December 1920 of the branch in Pustoshensk Volost, Sudogoda Uezd, Vladimir Guberniia:

	<i>Izvestiia</i>	<i>Pravda</i>	<i>Bednota</i>
Party organisations	1	1	2
Soviet offices	2	1	3
Agitation and educational department of the military commissariat	2	1	2
Volost executive committees	2	1	3
Post and telegraph offices	1	1	1
Urshelskii works committee	1	1	2
District department of social maintenance	1	0	3
Totals:	<u>10</u>	<u>6</u>	<u>16</u>

What conclusion can be drawn from these scattered figures? I believe it is what our party programme states, that 'Only the first steps in the transition from capitalism to communism are being taken . . . at the present time.'

Capitalism made newspapers capitalist ventures, a way of making money, a means of information and entertainment for the capitalists, and a tool for deceiving and cheating the working masses. We have destroyed this money spinning tool of chicanery. We have begun to change newspapers into a means of educating the masses and of teaching them to live and manage the economy without the landowners and the capitalists. But we are only at the beginning of the road. In the past three years or more not much has been achieved. There is still much to be done: indeed, the path before us is very long.

We have abolished newspaper subscriptions. (I have no figures for the distribution of books, that situation is probably even worse.) This is one step from capitalism towards communism. But capitalism cannot be killed by a single blow; up it comes again under the guise of 'soviet bureaucrats' who grab newspapers on one pretext or another—they must be grabbing a large quantity, though just how many we cannot say. We must make a sustained attack on the soviet bureaucrats in this sector, and slap them down for grabbing books and newspapers. Their share—and they themselves—must be steadily cut down. Regrettably, we cannot cut them down to a tenth, or a hundredth of their number—in our present state of education it would be dishonest to promise that, but we can and we must whittle them away. No true communist will fail in doing this.

We must ensure that, generally speaking, books and newspapers are distributed free only to libraries and reading rooms which provide a full service to the whole country and to all the masses of workers, soldiers and peasants. This will accelerate, intensify and increase the effectiveness of the people's search for literacy, enlightenment and learning. Only then will education advance in seven league boots.

As an illustration, here is a simple sum: there are 350,000 copies of *Izvestiia* and 250,000 copies of *Pravda* for the whole of Russia. We are poor. We have no newsprint. The workers are short of fuel, food, clothes and shoes. The machines are worn out. The buildings are delapidated. Let us assume that we have for the whole country—that is about 10,000 or more volosts—50,000 libraries and reading-rooms, and not just on paper, but in fact. This would provide at least three for each volost, and certainly one for each factory and military unit. Let us assume that we have learned to take not only 'the first step from capitalism to communism', but also the second and third. Let us assume that we have learned to distribute three copies of newspapers to every library and reading room, and suppose that two of these go on the 'public reading stands'. (Supposing also we have taken the fourth step from capitalism to communism, I make the bold suggestion that, instead of spoiling the newspapers by sticking them primitively on the walls, for easy reading and to keep them unspoilt we fix them to a smooth board with wooden pegs—we have no metal tacks and even at the 'fourth step' there will be a shortage of metal!) So, we have two copies each for 50,000 libraries and reading rooms to be 'stuck up' and one copy for the reserve. Let us assume also that we have learned to allow the soviet bureaucrats, those pampered gentry of the Soviet republic,

a moderate number of newspapers for them to waste, say, not more than a few thousand copies.

With revolutionary assumptions like these the country will have a service five times better with 160,000 or, perhaps 175,000 copies. The papers will be available for everyone to read the news (if the 'mobiles' which, only the other day, comrade F Dobler defended in *Pravda* so successfully, I thought, are properly organised). This only needs 350,000 copies of two newspapers. Today, there are 600,000, of which a large proportion are grabbed by the 'soviet bureaucrats', wasted as 'cigarette paper', etc simply because of habits acquired in the days of capitalism. This would save us 250,000 copies, or, in spite of our severe poverty, a saving sufficient to produce two dailies with a circulation of 125,000 copies each. These could each carry daily to the masses serious and worthwhile literature, the best modern and classical fiction and textbooks on general educational topics, agriculture and industry. Long before the war, the French bourgeoisie discovered how to make a profit by publishing light fiction, not at 3.50 francs a copy for the aristocracy, but at 10 centimes (*ie* one thirty-fifth of the price, 4 Kopeks pre-war) in the format of a popular magazine; why, then, can't we do the same—at the second step from capitalism to communism. Why can't we do this, and, within a year, in spite of our present poverty, discover how to give the people through each of the 50,000 libraries and reading rooms two separate newspapers, all necessary textbooks and world classics, and books on modern science and engineering.

We shall learn to do this.

7th February 1921. '*Pravda*' (28) 9th February 1921.
Signed N Lenin

To the State Publishing House [Gosizdat]. Copy to the book palace:

28TH APRIL 1921. I request you to commission the book palace to carry out the following work as an experiment:

1 From the major newspapers (*Izvestiia VTSIK, Pravda, Ekonomicheskaiia zhizn, Petrogradskaia pravda*) and the central oblast' newspapers—Ukrainian, Caucasian, Siberian, Uralian, etc (no more than ten altogether, with the central newspapers) take cuttings for the month of May of all material relevant to economic and production problems, including reports and statistical material; arrange them according to a detailed classification and stick them in albums; four parallel sets of these albums are to be maintained.

2 Construct very detailed classified and alphabetical indexes to the monthly set of newspapers, which will cover all material contained in them, including advertisements.

Fix piece work rates for the work outlined above, and on its successful completion, to the satisfaction of the Council of People's Commissars, make an award, to be kept in part by the recipient, by agreement with the awards department of the All Union Central Council of Trade Unions [VTS SPS].

Report to me when this has been done through the business manager of the Council of People's Commissars.

V Ul'ianov (Lenin), chairman of the Council of People's Commissars, Leninskii sbornik 35 p 239

From the speech on local economic bodies, delivered at a session of the all-Russia Central Executive Committee May 30 1921:

IN PRINTING THE reports, one of the main objects is to bring them within reach of the masses of non-party persons, and the general population. We cannot employ mass production and print large quantities of these reports, so we must concentrate them in the libraries. That being so, we must arrange for short printed summaries of the reports, which will give the gist of items most interesting to the masses. The technical facilities for this are available. Before coming here to speak I made enquiries of the Central Paper Board's representative. He has supplied me with an exact report on 339 uezd centres, which shows that each one has printing facilities and paper to issue very short reports. He has based his calculations on the assumption that the smallest uezd centre would print, monthly of course, one sheet. But monthly is too frequent. Whether you decide on once every two months, or every four, or perhaps even longer intervals, will obviously be determined by what reports we get from the regions. He has worked on a figure of 1,000 copies, and has accordingly calculated that the necessary amount of paper is already available. A thousand copies would be sufficient for us to distribute these reports to every uezd library, at least, thus bringing them within the reach of all who are interested in them, especially the non-party masses. Naturally, this will have to be experimental in the first place; no-one can guarantee its immediate success, and that there will be no imperfections.

In concluding my brief supplementary remarks I wish to emphasise one other matter. One of the most important tasks now facing us is recruiting on a large scale non-party people for this work, making sure that as well as party members and of course the departmental officials involved, the greatest possible

number of non-party people should take an interest in the work and be recruited for it. It seemed to us that there was no other way of achieving this except to publish the reports, or at least, the essence of them. Some institutions send in extremely full reports. All the existing information we have on this matter shows that some local centres are very well organised. At any rate, the work in the local centres constantly gives us a lot of very encouraging material. Our real trouble is our inability to give publicity to the best examples—not numerous—and elevate them as models which everyone ought to copy. The press does not draw attention to these really first class organisations with practical experience. To print these reports and make them accessible to the great mass of the people, to supply copies to every library, if only in every uezd, should help to recruit far greater numbers in the economic drive, as long as non-party conferences are properly convened. Many resolutions have been passed on this topic. In some places, steps have been taken, but looking at the country as a whole, it is certain that far too little is being done. However, by doing this, we shall improve the work in the institutions and give every local worker in every post of responsibility for economic affairs the opportunity to send the centre signed reports of exact and accurate details of his practical experience. This appears to be our chief lack at present . . .

First published in *I-IV Sessii Vserossiiskogo tsentral'nogo Ispionitel'nogo Komiteta VIII sozyva*. (Moscow, 1922)

Preface to I I Stepanov's 'The electrification of the Russian Soviet Federated Socialist Republic and the transitional phase of world economy':

I WARMLY RECOMMEND this book by comrade Stepanov to all communists.

The writer has succeeded in presenting us with a most competent exposition of outstandingly difficult and important questions. He did well to write a book not for intellectuals (as is commonly done by those who copy the worst habits of the bourgeois writers), but for the workers, the masses, the ordinary workers and peasants. For the benefit of those who may have difficulty in understanding some parts, the author has added to his book a bibliography for supplementary reading, and also to assist those who would like to read the main works on this topic published in Russia and abroad. Particular reference must be made to the opening lines of chapter VI, in which the author sketches exceedingly well the significance of the new economic

policy, and splendidly refutes the 'airy' scepticism shown in some quarters about the feasibility of electrification. This scepticism is usually a cover-up for the lack of any serious consideration of the subject (when it is not a cover for whiteguard, socialist-revolutionary and menshevik opposition to all soviet schemes, which, actually, it sometimes is).

Our greatest need for genuine mass education (not merely official lip service) is school textbooks like this one (for every type of school). If only our marxist authors would get down to writing manuals and textbooks like this on every conceivable social problem, instead of wasting their energies on political firecrackers in newspapers and magazines, and wearying everybody, we should not be in the disgraceful position we are now. Nearly five years after the proletariat gained political control, young people are being taught (or corrupted) in the proletariat's own state schools and universities by the same bourgeois scientists using the same bourgeois tripe.

The eighth congress of soviets ordered that compulsory instruction on the plan for electrification should be given in all educational institutions of the RSFSR, without exception. Like so many orders, this one has lain dormant because we bolsheviks lack education. Now comrade Stepanov has published his *Textbook for schools* we must ensure, as indeed we shall, that every uezd library (and then every volost library) stocks several copies and that every electric power station in Russia (more than 800) not only has copies of the book but also promotes public lectures on electricity, on the electrification of the RSFSR and on engineering generally. We must ensure that every village schoolteacher reads and masters this textbook. (Every uezd must get together a panel or group of engineers and physics teachers to help in this.) He must not only read, understand and assimilate it for himself, but be able to put it for himself, to put it over simply and intelligibly to his pupils and to young peasant workers generally.

This is no mean task. We are poor and uneducated. But that is of no account as long as our people recognise their need to learn, as long as they are willing to learn; as long as workers and peasants clearly understand that now they must learn not to be an investment for and make profits for the landowners and capitalists, but to improve their own living conditions.

We do possess this recognition and willingness to learn. So. we shall surely begin to learn, and surely learn something.

18th March 1922, signed N Lenin. 'Pravda' (64)

21st March 1922

From the article 'On cooperation':

. . . BUT IT WILL take a whole epoch of history to assimilate the whole population in the work of the cooperatives through NEP [new economic policy]. At best it will take a couple of decades. Even so, it will be a distinct historical epoch, and without it, without universal literacy, without reasonable efficiency, without developing in the people the habit of reading, and without the economic basis for this, without some reserves to insure us against, for example, poor harvests, famine etc—without these things we shall not achieve our aims.

*4th January 1923. First published in 'Pravda' 115 and 116
26th and 27th May 1923. Signed N Lenin*

From the resolution of the Council of People's Commissars [Sovnar-kom or SNK] 26th April 1918

. . . COMMISSION A V LUNACHARSKII to convene a conference of representatives of the People's Commissariat for Education [Nar-kompros] a representative of the central committee on the administration of archives . . . specialists nominated by the People's Commissariat for Education, and representatives of interested departments to work out a detailed design for organising the Central Archives Administration, and in particular a programme for reorganising the whole library system on the Swiss and American pattern.

*V Ul'ianov (Lenin), chairman of the Council pp L Fotieva,
secretary to the Council*

On library organisation: a resolution of the SNK 7th June 1918:

THE SNK BRINGS to the attention of the People's Commissariat for Education its lack of concern for the proper organisation of libraries in Russia, and commissions the commissariat immediately to take the most drastic measures firstly, to centralise library administration in Russia; and secondly, to introduce the Swiss and American system.

The People's Commissariat for Education is required to report twice a month to the SNK on the practical steps it has taken in this field.

'Leninskii sbornik' 21 pp 207-208

Decree of the Council of People's Commissars on safeguarding libraries and book depositories:

ALL LIBRARIES of state establishments subject to liquidation or evacuation, as well as libraries of individual societies and persons which have come under the direction of government institutions

either wholly or in part, etc, are supervised and registered by the People's Commissariat for Education in all parts of the Russian Soviet Federated Socialist Republic; the future of these libraries, their distribution, the placing of them at the disposal of the people, the stocking of them, and the establishment of new libraries is handled by a department for libraries in the Russian Soviet Federated Socialist Republic, attached to the People's Commissariat for Education. In the case of libraries already under the jurisdiction of particular people's commissariats, the department is carrying out the functions outlined above in consultation with the relevant people's commissariats.

All institutions and organisations which are listed as having libraries of any kind, or which have libraries at their disposal, must not later than 15th August this year report the fact to the library department of the people's commissariat for education; neglect of this regulation is considered a breach of revolutionary law and order, and renders the offender liable to prosecution.

*Vl Ul'ianov (Lenin), chairman of the
Council of People's Commissars; Vl
Bonch-Bruevich, business manager of
the Council of People's Commissars.*

17th July 1918

Decree of the Council of People's Commissars on the procedure for requisitioning libraries, book depositories and books generally:

THE COUNCIL OF PEOPLE'S COMMISSARS has decreed:

1 The requisitioning of libraries, book shops, book depositories and books in general is done only with the knowledge and agreement of the People's Commissariat for Education.

2 In cases where books turn up in property being confiscated for any reason, they must immediately be put at the disposal of the library section of the People's Commissariat for Education, or at the disposal of local organs for national education, which should report the fact to the People's Commissariat for Education.

3 The People's Commissariat for Education is commissioned to issue instructions on the application of the present decree.

*Vl Ul'ianov, chairman of the Council
of People's Commissars; Vl D Bonch-
Bruevich, business manager of the
Council of People's Commissars; L
Fotieva, secretary. 26th November 1918*

Resolution of the Council of People's Commissars:

THE COUNCIL OF PEOPLE'S COMMISSARS has resolved: *a*) to require the People's Commissariat for Foreign Affairs, the registration department of the Extraordinary Commission [VCHK] and all organs under its jurisdiction, as well as the Military Commissariat and the organs under its jurisdiction, to send any white guard literature they have, Russian and foreign, in so far as it applies to their special functions, to the People's Commissariat for Education for preservation and public use in state libraries. *b*) The literature should be addressed to the state book depository of the People's Commissariat for Education (Volkhonka, 18, the premises of the Scholastic Secretary).

*V Ul'ianov (Lenin) chairman of the
Council of People's Commissars; S
Brichkina, secretary. The Kremlin,
Moscow, 17th January 1920*

Decree of the Council of People's Commissars on the nationalisation of stocks of books and other printed matter:

1 ALL STOCKS of books and other printed matter (with the exception of libraries) belonging to private individuals and to cooperative and other institutions and also those municipalised by the Soviets are declared state property (are nationalised).

Note. The effect of this clause does not extend to production units (private or cooperative presses of literary and educational societies whose total resources fall to the People's Commissariat for Education for distribution through its organs).

2 The implementation of this decree is entrusted at high level to the People's Commissariat for Education and at a local level to the Presidium of the Executive Committees, who will be required to establish local three-man committees made up of a representative from each of the Department of National Education, the Workers' and Peasants' Inspectorate and the Administrative Department.

3 Holders of books and cooperative organisations guilty of concealing collections of books and other printed matter will be prosecuted. House committees and representatives of committees of professional and industrial workers have the same liability.

*V Ul'ianov (Lenin), chairman of the
Council of People's Commissars; Vlad
Bonch-Bruevich, business manager of
the Council of People's Commissars;
L Fotieva, secretary of the Council
of People's Commissars. 20th April 1920*

Decree of the Council of People's Commissars on the transfer of bibliographical work in the RSFSR to the state publishing house:
THE COUNCIL OF PEOPLE'S COMMISSARS has resolved:

1 Bibliographical work in the RSFSR is transferred to the control of the People's Commissariat for Education.

2 The People's Commissariat for Education has responsibility for the registration of all printed matter published in the RSFSR and for the publication of lists of this material.

3 The People's Commissariat for Education promotes the development of bibliographical work and to this end: sets up local book palaces and takes under its control those which already exist together with their agents; opens bibliographical institutes and runs courses; organises bibliographical libraries; publishes books and journals on bibliographical questions; and regulates and co-ordinates the activity of all bibliographical institutions and societies.

4 The People's Commissariat for Education publishes compulsory regulations on the free deposit of new publications in state and other book depositories and determines what depositories are to receive the free copies.

5 To implement this resolution the People's Commissariat for Education issues compulsory rules rendering those who break them liable to punishment on conviction in a people's court.

*V Ul'ianov (Lenin), chairman of the
Council of People's Commissars;
Vlad Bonch-Bruевич, business manager
of the Council of People's Commissars;
L Fotieva, secretary. 30th June 1920*

Decree of the Council of People's Commissars on the centralisations of libraries in the RSFSR:

IN VIEW OF the continually growing demand for books the Council of People's Commissars resolves:

1 All libraries, both those under the control of the People's Commissariat for Education and libraries of all other departments, institutions and voluntary organisations are declared open to all. They are joined in a single library network throughout the RSFSR and are transferred to the control of the People's Commissariat for Education (the Chief Political-Education Committee).

2 To establish a single library network and coordinate work a central inter-departmental library committee is attached to the Political-Education Committee of the People's Commissariat for Education. It is made up as follows: from persons from the

People's Commissariat for Education (the Political-Education section, the school and academic sectors, and the Chief Committee for Professional-Technical Education), two persons from the All Russian Central Council of Trade Unions, one person from the Political Directorate of the Revolutionary Military Council of the Republic.

Note. The members of the committee are approved by the People's Commissariat for Education.

3 The Committee has as its province: *a*) the establishment of libraries and changes in their status; *b*) working out and approving plans for redistributing book resources; *c*) drawing up a procedure for transferring the libraries of other departments to the control of the People's Commissariat for Education; *d*) extending the library network; *e*) setting up a procedure for using libraries of a specialised and technical nature and for stocking them, in consultation with interested departments; *f*) setting up a procedure for using school libraries and organising children's reading.

4 Local committees are attached to local departments of the state publishing house. They are made up of representatives of: The Political-Education Department, the Military Commissariat, the Department of Public Education and the local trades union organisation.

5 All libraries included in the unified library network (apart from special libraries) are stocked through local distribution committees who receive books from the central distribution committee attached to the state publishing house.

6 A central library supply agency is attached to the library sub-department and supplies book collections to uezd departments of public education for new libraries of various kinds.

7 Attached to the library sections of the Political-Education Committee are library supply and distribution agencies, with staffs of instructors, and having responsibility for all work in connection with stocking libraries.

*V Bonch-Bruevich, business manager
of the Council of People's Commissars; L
Fotieva, secretary. 3rd November 1920*

Decree of the Council of People's Commissars on payment for publications of the non-periodical press:

THE COUNCIL OF PEOPLE'S COMMISSARS resolves:

1 From the publication of this decree publications of the non-periodical press (books, pamphlets, journals) are delivered to all state institutions, voluntary organisations and private persons

only on terms established according to the procedure outlined below.

2 The price for newly published books and journals from state organs is established by them according to the actual cost price, taking into account all the expenses involved in publication.

3 Prices established by state organs are binding on all local institutions and persons engaged in the book trade and may be changed only with the permission of these organs.

4 Permits to engage in the book trade are granted by the governing departments of local executive committees in accordance with instructions issued by the People's Commissariat for Internal Affairs together with the People's Commissariat for Education.

5 In distributing publications, the People's Commissariat for Education follows the established principles, which guarantee in the first place a service to the system of state schools, libraries, agitation centres, reading huts and workers clubs and the provision of reading matter for the workers.

6 Red Army units and military organisations are supplied with literature at the expense of the Revolutionary Military Council of the Republic.

7 Agitation literature, information literature and departmental literature may be distributed among the people at the expense of the interested departments, institutions and organisations.

8 The sale of publications abroad is carried out under special conditions laid down by the People's Commissariat for Education in consultation with the People's Commissariat for External Trade.

9 The People's Commissariat for Education is required within a fortnight to draw up and publish instructions on regulating the distribution of publications throughout the network of educational institutions and the availability of these publications to the working masses.

*V Ul'ianov (Lenin), chairman of the
Council of People's Commissars; N
Gorbunov, business manager of the
Council of People's Commissars;
L Fotieva, secretary. 28th November 1921*

List of items not translated

- From a letter to M F Andreeva April 1908
Review of *Eksponaty po okhrane truda . . .* 1914
From the article 'Karl Marx' (bibliographical guide) 1914
Instructions about the transfer of the reference library 1918
A telegram to the St Petersburg library department of Narkompros June 1918
About the library of P I Surkov (three letters) 1918
Telegram to the library department of Narkompros 13th January 1919
Speech at the second conference of heads of adult education sections of guberniia departments of public education 24th January 1919
Letter to V V Vorovskii 24th October 1919
Exchange of letters with M N Pokrovskii 11th November 1919
Note to M N Pokrovskii 15th January 1920
Telegram to G E Zinov'ev 28th February 1920
Notes on the draft of a decree on the centralisation of library work 1920
A note to the library of the Rumiantsev Museum 1st September 1920
Draft from the *Theses on production propaganda* 18th November 1920
Note to A B Lunacharskii 1920
Draft from the pamphlet Instructions of the Council of Labour and Defence to local social soviet institutions 1921
From a letter to the director of the Marx-Engels Institute 2nd February 1921
From the directives to the workers of Narkompros 5th February 1921
Instruction to his secretary 6th February 1921
Letter to M N Pokrovskii 7th February 1921
Letter to Narkompros 8th April 1921
Letter to E A Litkens 17th May 1921
Letter to N L Meshcheriakov 23rd May 1921
Note on a letter of an American university library 6th June 1921
Letter to the Committee for Foreign Literature 30th September 1921
Enquiry about the use of white guard literature 7th October 1921
The new economic policy and the tasks of Political Education Bodies [Politprosvet] 17th October 1921
Desirable literature published in Germany 25th October 1921
Letter to Tsentropchat' 8th November 1921

Note to N P Gorbunov 19th November 1921

Note about the distribution of literature to the congress delegates
December 1921

Enquiry to A B Lunacharskii, M N Pokrovskii and E A Litkens
17th December 1921

From a letter to Narkompros 17th May 1922

Reminiscences by V D Bonch-Bruevich, M N Pokrovskii and V
A Modestov

Part two: Krupskaja on libraries

We shall fulfil Lenin's instructions on library work'; introductory remarks at the all-union conference on theoretical questions of library science and bibliography, 16th-27th December 1936:

COMRADES, IN THE LIBRARY SECTOR of our cultural front our work is made much easier by the detailed instructions of Vladimir Il'ich, who always showed great concern for library matters. In just the same way the party attaches great importance to libraries; we all know how vitally significant was the Central Executive Committee [TSIK] decree of 27th March 1934, calling the attention of party workers to this aspect of socialist construction. I mention this because it has left its mark on all our work.

I should like to speak first about two things which assisted the rise of librarianship; the all-union library census, and socialist competition for the best rural library.

We were very concerned about the census; yet in spite of detailed preparations for it and numerous meetings, a majority of library workers failed to grasp its true importance. The census was implemented on 1st October 1934, and we are all aware that though it did not produce all the results which it might have done, because of weak organisation, nevertheless the survey helped increase the accuracy of our work, thanks greatly to the national, rather than selective, basis on which it was taken.

The survey showed huge library resources, as well as how great an attraction libraries have for the people, but it also revealed a number of shortcomings. In the first place it was impossible to be exact; no precise figures were received of the number of readers, and only a provisional survey of stock was possible, thanks to the ignorance of many librarians of their own resources. It could be stated that a library contained one million or two million books, but seldom what kinds of books were represented by such figures. This suggested a failure to take into account the reader and his requests. What is a library, and for whom does it exist? Library stock ought not to lie idle. One must know how, in the words of Lenin, to 'feed hungry' readers with books—to build up library stock, to get to know the readers.

The library census did not occur unnoticed; it mobilised leading library personnel, encouraged thought about libraries, and has resulted in the last two years in much progress and many improvements.

But this is only a beginning. How to make the library something that is near to the masses—to unite all libraries, scholarly ones included, more closely with the masses—is the problem we face continually. Socialist competition for the best rural library has had a considerable effect here. It is a constant charge that our work in the country is poorer than that in the towns; it is easy to make, for the gulf between the cultures of town and country, a relic of capitalism, is not removed by a wave of the hand. Its removal depends on the social structure, on prolonged and diligent work to raise the cultural standards of the country.

Some of the consequences of socialist competition for the best rural library have been a revivification of libraries, increases in the numbers of readers, and a general concern throughout the masses for the cultural force of the library. This has been of vast significance for the progress of librarianship; we are constructing not just a library, but a soviet library—one which is really close to and part of the masses.

Life is being turned upside down, and its direction changed. During recent years our whole surroundings have undergone change, our country has become socialist, has become more cultured, and the very psychology of the average reader has altered. This new tenor of life naturally opens up wide perspectives, but at the same time makes considerable demands on us. We must use the experience of other countries, of capitalist countries, in every way we can; in technical reconstruction, in technical service to readers we must borrow all that we can. But we must build our own library—a library of a different kind, more in keeping with our socialist way of life.

Those who work in libraries intend to create a real soviet system—to get to know their readers and to give them, not just a service, but the kind of service expected in a socialist society. Where in a local context questions arise which they cannot themselves resolve, comparison and intercommunication throughout the country, from the library point of view, is the profitable answer.

Let us take an instance. We receive a vast number of letters posing questions, asking for clear and detailed instructions on one thing or another. Because of the socialist competition which we instituted, close ties have now grown up between the libraries themselves and the library management of the Narkompros. We

are continually asked how to study readers, how to serve them by means of bibliographies, catalogues and reference books of all kinds, how to organise this work in a way which will allow the best possible service. Hence this conference, promoted to exchange our collective wealth of experience, so as to provide a properly considered basis for action.

I look for hard work from this conference, especially in the interchange of experience. The ground for the conference has been carefully prepared, through a series of prior meetings with various groups of workers. Although I have attended only two or three of these, they have given me a clear idea of what needs to be done. If we compare the present with the time, two years ago, of the library census, we shall see that we have learned a great deal.

The widespread national discussion, throughout every section of the population, which heralded the adoption of the new soviet constitution, the ardent speeches which were made then and since, have all helped us to see how the self consciousness of the masses has come of age, how broad culturally are their demands and how specific. That this conference meets after the adoption of the constitution, has illuminated a great number of questions for us. We must bring our work nearer to the masses, and even change our way of speaking. To make free with special library terminology, as has been our custom, is not good enough. In our professional work we should avoid library jargon; we ought to speak so that not only the librarian understands, but also so that what is said is clear to the readers as well.

Turning to another topic, it will be necessary now not only to study the adoption of the constitution, but also to bend our efforts towards the practice of what is laid down in the constitution, so that, using it as a foundation, we may move further along the road to building communism. This requires library workers to make far higher demands of themselves.

Let us take the question of readers. We must avoid considering the reader outside time and place, from an academic or general point of view, as is common in bourgeois library literature; he must be observed in the context of his working and domestic situation. The link between the reader's needs and the age, the moment in time in which he lives, is a strong one, and as one cannot generalise about readers' demands except for a particular age, it is with the demands which arise from the socialist way of life within our country, and what is distinctive or special about them, that we are concerned. For example, current international affairs provoke numerous lines of enquiry

and interest, and I receive many such from very remote districts. I recently received a letter from kolkhoz workers in Omsk asking about war. They write in a primitive fashion, asking 'What about us? Will there be war with Japan? Or with the Germans?' Such people may be supposed to know nothing and understand nothing about international relations. But then they go on to say 'How can we go to war with the Germans? We have some German kolkhozy near us, and these Germans are workers just like ourselves.' It is remarkable how socialism creates such deep international consciousness, and when you select books on war for kolkhoz workers you must understand that they already possess what I may call an international instinct. This is the importance of studying contemporary experience. But it does not mean that all our readers are the same, or that all their requests are identical. To acquire a sound knowledge of what a reader is interested in, one must know the region in which he lives and what industries there are there, whether kolkhozy predominate, or heavy industry, and this the librarian must study if he is to grasp what the reader is after.

We must beware of inaccuracy of expression, for example in theses stating how the librarian ought to equip himself to interpret his readers' requests correctly. It is true that the librarian ought to know basic marxism-leninism, that he ought to know his profession, but such statements as 'one ought to know a bit of everything' are stupid and misleading, for instead of giving the impression that a librarian ought to be a well educated person, they imply rather that superficial knowledge is enough.

A further question is how to serve the reader and it is here that bibliography comes to the fore. When I have to do with library affairs, I encounter some things which to a non-librarian (and I am not a professional librarian) appear very strange, and which I view with bewilderment. Take the question of annotation. I remember what arguments there used to be with publishing houses, which would have had us believe that annotation ought not to include any kind of political evaluation, that objectivity was all important. This must depend on what kind of annotation is being made, and for what purpose. It may be that a simple annotation is sufficient merely for arranging books, but that side by side with this annotation there ought to be a marxist evaluation of the book. It is no simple matter to evaluate a book properly, but a large question and one must be a good marxist to tackle it. Thus with every step do librarians feel how much they need to study marxism-leninism, and everywhere in the

country passionately to offer to their readers the works of Marx and Engels.

At this conference you will be considering important problems. In my introduction I cannot linger over all of them, but I should like to direct you particularly to the problem of making special libraries accessible to the masses. Take technical libraries. There are technical libraries in industrial enterprises, but often they are only used by engineering staff and not by the mass readership which needs them. Why did Lenin emphasise the need to widen the workers' appreciation of technical things, to create interest in a particular field of technology and impart understanding of technical books? I was once in the Red Textile Worker factory, and I spoke to the textile workers about cotton, where it was obtained, how the people lived there and what kind of people they were, and it surprised me that in such a factory many people knew nothing at all about the subject. This was, of course, a long time ago, and there isn't a textile factory today in which they don't know where cotton grows and who produces it. This sort of knowledge is basic.

If we could establish libraries which would themselves serve as an introduction to our technical libraries, which would encourage a technical outlook and give people a basic knowledge of the physics, chemistry and mathematics necessary for competence in a particular field of technology, we could then afford to make the technical libraries more accessible to the masses. The library of the polytechnical museum is working on these lines, but it is essential that the practice should spread, because the basic technical examination, as I hear from those who conduct the examination, often amounts to no more than the acquired habits of a trade. The possession of the minimum technical qualification must be linked with a familiarity with technical literature; it must take as its slogan: 'Technology for the masses'.

A further question concerns those libraries which few people know about. Quite by chance I learned, for example, of the technical libraries where documentation [here, documents dealing with the history of a particular factory, its management etc] is done, because I have a friend who is interested in factory history [N P Paialin, author of several books on the subject]. He wrote the history of the Semianikovskii factory, and told how he used to visit technical libraries where documents were preserved. There was a rich collection of material which nobody knew about, showing what capitalism was, telling of various kinds of exploitation and so forth. He went to one library where the librarian was contemptuous that a working man should visit

a library intended for technical staff, and spoke to him in latin! In another library, when he asked where to find the material he sought, the librarian merely answered 'Seek and ye shall find'! There was some justification for specialist librarians to believe that their libraries were beyond the man in the street. But now when factory histories are written (a most interesting branch of history) valuable matters are often brought to light in these document departments.

I once sought first hand evidence at Balakhna to support my own recollections of a paper mill in Uglich at which my father had been factory inspector for a time in 1875. I received useful information from a former worker at the mill, and although there is no longer any trace of the paper mill in Uglich, people have survived. And when I hear about library documentation, I think what a good thing it would be if the valuable material which exists were collected and exhibited, not only for technical staff but for amateurs and historians.

I am very interested in the question of making libraries more accessible and less exclusive. Often we do not display them to good effect or exhibit their specific socialist character. For example, I should like to hear the speaker on the Lenin Library express the socialist character of its work, what assistance its reference services give to our planners, how exchange of books is done, exhibitions mounted and how help is given to the mass libraries.

The catalogue is a subject which has been included on the conference agenda. Our approach must not be that of the narrow specialist, but that the reader needs the catalogue. Not everyone is competent to use a card catalogue, and though this mattered less in the days when readers were few and the librarian had time to attend to each one, now when libraries are full of readers there is special need to provide catalogues and handbooks and to ensure that readers know how to use them.

We have no printed catalogues, though they are absolutely essential, as I know for myself; when I need anything myself I turn to the 1914 catalogue of the Society of Teachers. Perhaps under 'Zola' I may see an entry for the novel *Germinal*, and immediately vivid recollections spring to my mind of the tremendous impression it made upon me when I first read it, long ago in 1890. Lenin too kept a photograph of Zola by him, and when I asked him why, replied 'He took up arms over the Dreyfus affair and his novels are very interesting'. It was this novel which aroused my interest in anarchism and made me realise how fic-

tion is linked with scholarly literature; fiction works on our feelings and this is its strength.

Reverting to catalogues and the arrangement of books, one of the questions you will be discussing here is whether we should have a divided or undivided catalogue, and if the former on what principles it should be divided up. It is extremely important to arrange books in the best way from the marxist point of view. Either the works of Marx, Engels, Lenin and Stalin can be put on a separate shelf, without their articles and works being linked with other topics; or else they can be put on special shelves but at the same time have individual articles by them put with the topics they illustrate; thus books on technology would be shelved alongside statements on technology by Marx, Engels, Lenin and Stalin. This ought to be done in the catalogues as well as on the shelves.

Librarians themselves must work like stakhanovites. This is a question, not of hours put in, whether six, or eight, or more, but of emulating Stakhanov's businesslike attitude to his work and to organising it and the labour of those who worked with him. Our work must be a model of efficiency, and in striving for this we must draw on the experience of our colleagues. Efficient organisation is important in both large and small libraries.

Finally I come to the last thing I wish to say. The twentieth anniversary of the establishment of soviet rule is drawing near. Our history over the last twenty years is a unique part of our lives. From that history and from our experience, lessons will be drawn by workers from other countries, by marxists, by young people. We must not fail to point out the way we have come on our own small library front—what we have done, how we have done it, and what little knowledge we had to begin with. I hope that in your exchanges of views and your work in the sections, you may come to a deeper appreciation of the link between your work and real life, and your obligation, expressed in the constitution, to establish this work on a broader base and bring it into ever closer contact with the masses. It is my wish that our conference should proceed from this standpoint.

Edited and condensed from 'Krasnyi bibliotekar'
(1) 1937 21-30

Part three: Reminiscences about Krupskaja & Lenin

*From 'Nadezhda Lenin and the labour movement'
by N Rubakin:*

KRUPSKAJA WAS a teacher at one of the Sunday and evening schools near St Petersburg on the so-called 'Shlissel'burg road', in one of the major St Petersburg industrial areas. This district played a major role in the history of the Russian labour movement [and] there existed, and energetically functioned, a whole range of Sunday and evening schools with many hundreds of students, and also other educational institutions (libraries, reading rooms, a theatre). With few exceptions, it was mainly young women who worked in them, without payment, and among them were quite a number of revolutionaries of various parties. Their energy was staggering, their enthusiasm for their work moving, their onward rush towards revolution irresistible. And all this with a modest bearing, raising no suspicions about their loyalty in anyone.

Krupskaja was one such teacher. Exceedingly modest, intelligent, well-educated, thoughtful, by strenuous work and diligent and careful reading she came to a marxist world outlook, of which she was a firm protagonist even in those years, and never divorced her words from her actions. Such were the other revolutionary teachers also, and there were many of them. Krupskaja worked not only in a Sunday school, but in a variety of other educational institutions, distributed popular scientific booklets, and took part in organising soup kitchens for the starving during the great crop failure of 1891-92. I often met Krupskaja between 1890 and 1892, up to the time when the police expelled me from St Petersburg with 40 other writers for our protest against their massacre of the crowd. Soon I learned that Krupskaja was abroad and had married Lenin.

As my wife was also a teacher in the same Sunday schools where Krupskaja had taught, for several years it was my lot to stand very close to this youthful company, and all of us, schoolmasters, schoolmistresses and I, continually puzzled over the

problem of what we ought to do, by means of workers' education, to smash tsarism and its yoke.

N A Rubakin's archive in the Lenin State Library of the USSR, f no 358. 'Sovetskaia pedagogika' (2) 1961 124-126

Lenin-Ul'ianov—the man and the revolutionary, by N Rubakin:

FIRST OF ALL, a page from my personal recollections. The year was 1887. I was studying natural science and working in the zoological department of the University of St Petersburg. There was another student working with me in the same section. I can still recall him as clearly as if he were standing here before me—a beardless youth with typical Russian features—thoughtful, not very talkative, with a childish candour apparent not only in his manner of speaking but also in his thinking and feeling. Students and professors alike had high hopes for his future. In February, 1887, he was awarded the university's gold medal which prompted the zoological department to arrange a students' dinner in his honour.

Then suddenly this student vanished. Some time later, we, his fellow students, were deeply shocked to discover that he had been hanged for his complicity in an unsuccessful plot against the life of Alexander III.

Who was this student who had been hanged? He was Alexander Il'ich Ul'ianov, elder brother of Vladimir Il'ich Ul'ianov, now known throughout the world under his pseudonym 'Lenin'. Both brothers were born in Nizhni Novgorod, the large trading city situated on the spot where the waters of the Volga converge with the river Oka. His father was a teacher in the local gymnasium; both boys attended school in another town on the Volga, Simbirsk; both stemmed from the hereditary Russian official class; both grew up with an intense and deep seated hatred of the contemporary Russian social system. With so much in common, can there be any doubt that his brother's execution did leave an indelible stamp on Lenin?

Of all the personalities who came to the fore in the Russian revolution of 1917, Lenin is unquestionably one of the most outstanding, and his character is certainly the most sharply defined. He is above all a man of willpower and emotions. This iron will drives him not only to fight, but to do so without respite; everything standing in his way is crushed underfoot; moreover his emotions make him capable of extremes of love and hate. This hatred is not, however, directed against people, but against a system—the (for him) accursed bourgeois system of society, the very foundations of which socialists must struggle to uproot.

This love and hate builds a wall around Lenin, preventing him from finding out what real, living, ordinary mortals are like. It is true that Lenin is undeniably a good friend and family man who knows how to be both generous and kind. Nevertheless this is not his natural attitude to all men, but is reserved for those he has handpicked and appraised according to party standards. For Lenin, every person is an idea circulating on two legs, and should this phenomenon start up a discussion with him, it either does, or does not, agree with him. Any opinion contrary to his own provokes his anger; his feeling of hatred for the bourgeois social system springs from a deep conviction which manifests itself not only in relation to opponents of socialism, but also in connection with those who thwart him personally: it is, in fact, a hatred which embraces all those who do not share his views or belong to his own wing of the social-democrats.

In the long run it is inevitable that a man with this keen mind, highly charged emotions and energy, and with such a monumental impatience about the opinions of others, should wind up as a political egocentric. His ideas, his efforts, his intentions, his party, his programme, his tactics, are for him the beginning and the end. The ultimate result, as the saying goes, is 'ultima ratio—potestas!' From there to despotism—despotism for the sake of an idea—is only a short step.

Here we come to a very important—perhaps even the most important trait in Lenin's character—namely its ethical side. Undoubtedly as far as Lenin is concerned, politics triumph over ethics. In regard to ethics, Lenin is by no means such an absolute enemy of compromise as in the political arena. He can hardly at any time have analysed the basic principles of ethics, including the principle of good and bad. Anything contributing to the mastery of the proletariat is good in his view, while anything preventing such mastery is bad; this principle is evident, in all Lenin's work and actions.

Clarens, February 1918. Die internationale Rundschau
(3) 1918 97-105

From 'Krupskaia's meeting with Lenin', by V Dridzo:

IT IS RECALLED that in 1936, at a staff meeting of the publishers of the paper *Komsomol'skaia pravda*, the young people asked Nadezhda Konstantinovna to tell them how she met Vladimir Il'ich and became friendly with him. And this is what she told them.

Vladimir Il'ich came to St Petersburg in the autumn of 1893, but she didn't meet him at once. On his arrival in St Petersburg

he attached himself to the marxist groups, immediately astounding everyone with his brilliant understanding of the works of Marx and Engels, his deep appreciation of the economic position of Russia and the development of the labour movement, his capacity for applying his study of Marx to an analysis of the political situation and the development of the economy. Soon after his arrival Vladimir Il'ich was at the centre of the organisation of St Petersburg marxists. Nadezhda Konstantinovna heard that he never read belles lettres, had never read a single novel, and didn't know a single piece of poetry. Only much later in exile did she learn that Vladimir Il'ich knew not only Russian, but also foreign literature, and loved, as she did, Nekrasov, Turgenyev, Tolstoi, Dobroliubov, Belinskii. He was particularly fond of Chernyshevskii and he knew his novel *What is to be done?* almost by heart.

Nadezhda Konstantinovna met Vladimir Il'ich for the first time at a meeting of St Petersburg marxists in 1894, held at the flat of P E Klasson under the pretext of Shrovetide celebrations. They got to know each other better, met often, and shared all their thoughts. Vladimir Il'ich often went to Nadezhda's house after meetings of the workers' group which he conducted, and several of her pupils were members of Vladimir Il'ich's group. When Vladimir Il'ich was taken ill with pneumonia, Nadezhda often called on him. Common interests and a common purpose brought them together, and friendship gradually turned to love.

After Vladimir Il'ich's arrest in December 1895, Nadezhda wrote to him through his relations. He, in turn, was concerned about her and often asked in his open communications: 'Has the library got a book about lampreys?' 'Lamprey' or 'fish' was Nadezhda Konstantinovna's party code name and this meant: has she been arrested?

From the prison passage by which the prisoners were taken for exercise, Vladimir Il'ich could see a bit of the pavement along Shpalernaia street. He wrote a cipher message to Nadezhda Konstantinovna asking her to come to that spot at a certain time so that he could see her (she remembered that this had to be 2.15 p.m.) Nadezhda Konstantinovna invited her friend Apollinariia Iakubova to go with her, but she only smiled: 'No, you go alone. It's you he wants to see, not me'.

For three successive days Nadezhda Konstantinovna went to Shpalernaia street and stood there for up to an hour and a half. Vladimir Il'ich told her later of how disappointed he was not to be able to catch sight of her after all except in the distance.

Nadezhda was in fact soon arrested herself, but the undercover correspondence between them continued. When Vladimir Il'ich had been sentenced to three years' exile in Siberia, she was still awaiting trial, and they were again unable to see each other, but before going into exile, Vladimir Il'ich sent Nadezhda, through her mother, a letter written in invisible ink, in which he spoke of his love for her.

Nadezhda was released from prison after Vladimir Il'ich had left for Siberia, for the village of Shushenskoe, where he was to spend his exile. She was released on bail after the 'Vetrova incident'. (A prisoner named Vetrova, it was said, who had been raped by gendarmes, soaked herself in paraffin and set fire to herself. This story caused widespread indignation, and the gendarmes released a number of women political prisoners.) She was confined to St Petersburg and kept under constant surveillance. When, in the summer of 1897, Nadezhda and her mother went to Valdaik station, the district judge promptly informed the head of the provincial gendarmery where she was staying and who were her friends, and told him that a special watch on her had been instituted.

Then from Shushenskoe where he had been sent, Vladimir Il'ich wrote a long letter to Nadezhda, again in invisible ink, in which he invited her to visit him and asked her to be his wife.

Nadezhda Konstantinovna loved Vladimir Il'ich deeply. She knew his feelings for her, and his proposal was not unexpected, but out of shyness, embarrassment, and fear of grand phrases she replied: 'As for being your wife—yes, I'll be your wife'. Vladimir Il'ich often reminded her afterwards of this answer.

About a year later came the judgment on Nadezhda's case. She was sentenced to three years' exile in Ufa, but at her request she was permitted to serve the sentence at Shushenskoe, after she and Vladimir Il'ich had made a declaration that they were engaged.

V Dridzo 'N K Krupskaja' (Moscow, 1958) p 14-16

From 'October memories' by A V Lunacharskii:

IT WAS THE DAY that the first Sovnarkom [Council of People's Commissars] was formed. I was told that the party central committee in choosing a government had decided to entrust me with the People's Commissariat for Education. The news was thrilling, terrifying even, in the huge responsibility which was laid on my shoulders.

Some time later, and quite by chance (we were all at that time overloaded with all kinds of work) I met Vladimir Il'ich again in the corridors of the Smol'nyi. His expression was very serious

as he beckoned me to him and said: 'I want a word with you, Anatolii Vasil'evich, I haven't the time now to give you any instructions on your new duties, nor can I say that I have any fully worked out system in mind respecting the first steps the revolution ought to take in the matter of education. It is clear that there is a great deal which will have to be overthrown, reshaped, and set on new paths. I think that it is very necessary for you to have a serious talk on the subject with Nadezhda Konstantinovna. She will help you. She has put a lot of thought into these problems and, I think, has mapped out a good line . . . As for higher education, here Mikhail Nikolaevich Pokrovskii ought to be of help. But with all reforms the greatest care is necessary, in my opinion. It's a very complicated business. One thing is clear: we must take every care to make institutions of higher education more accessible to the masses, and above all to proletarian youth.

'I attach great importance to libraries. You ought to make these your responsibility. Get library experts to help. In America, a lot of good work is being done in this sector. The book is a mighty force. The demand for books will greatly increase as a result of the revolution. We must offer the reader not only great reading rooms, but also free movement of books, which should be brought to the reader. It will be necessary to make use of the postal service for this and to build up every kind of mobile service. It is probable that for the great majority of our people, among whom the number of literates will grow, there will not be enough books to go round and if we don't give books wings and don't increase their circulation drastically we shall have a book famine.

'I hope to find a moment in the near future to discuss this again with you and to ask you what plans you have formulated to do the job and what people you can recruit. You are well aware what a time this is: it's only with difficulty that one can find ten minutes for the most important task. I wish you success. The first victory has been won, but if we don't follow it up with a whole series of victories, we shall come to grief. The struggle is certainly not over; it's only just beginning.'

Vladimir Il'ich shook me warmly by the hand and with his confident, brisk walk, went into one of the then countless offices, where the new thoughts and the new will of the infant proletariat state came together and took shape.

'Recollections of Vladimir Il'ich Lenin' v 1 (Gospolitizdat, 1956) p 548-549

'From my memoirs' by V A Karpinskii:

VLADIMIR IL'ICH did not think it at all reprehensible or beneath his dignity to be one of the most punctilious borrowers from the G A Kuklin library [Karpinskii was the librarian]. He fully approved of and appreciated the strict rules which we instituted to ensure the proper circulation of books and the preservation of rarities and archive material. Vladimir Il'ich didn't 'appropriate' a single book, and always paid for his reading at the standard rate. Of course, a party library, although solely supported by readers' subscriptions, could without question make exception for the editor of the party's central organ. But to Vladimir Il'ich this seemed a personal privilege. This was the one and only time in my experience as a librarian when I had to convince a borrower, not that he ought to pay for his reading, but that he ought not to do so. But Vladimir Il'ich could not be persuaded on this point. He had the money, therefore he ought to pay, and that was the end of it! The only thing Vladimir Il'ich would agree to in the end, or rather, reconcile himself to, was that the library should not limit the number of books he might borrow or the loan period.

Zapiski Instituta Lenina v 2 (Gosizdat, 1927) p 97

From 'Lenin's work in libraries' by N K Krupskaja:

LENIN SPENT A LOT of time in libraries. When he lived in Samara, he borrowed a great many books from the library. After moving to St Petersburg he sat for whole days in the public library, and borrowed books from the library of the Free Economic Society and from a number of others. Even when he was in prison, his sister brought him library books. In writing *The development of capitalism in Russia* he had to use 583 books. Could Lenin have bought all these books for himself? Many of them were not even on sale; for example, the Zemstvo statistical accounts which were particularly valuable for Lenin. But apart from this, Lenin was then living as a student, in a tiny room, spending hardly anything on himself. There was no possibility of his spending so much money—which would have run into thousands—on the purchase of these books; he hadn't the time to run from bookshop to bookshop in search of them—there would have been no time left to read them; and without library catalogues he would not have known even of the existence of many of them. And, finally, he had nowhere to keep them.

In 1895 he went abroad for the first time, to a whole range of new impressions. He lived for a few weeks in Berlin, observing working life, and simultaneously studying in Berlin Imperial

Library. In 1895 he was thrown into prison and within three weeks had organised ways of using library books. He not only used the prison library, but contrived, even though under lock and key, to use libraries freely. Three weeks after his arrest, Vladimir Il'ich openly wrote:

' . . . Prisoners are permitted to engage in literary studies: I enquired from the procurator about this particularly, although I was already aware of it (even those serving sentences are granted permission). He assured me that there were no restrictions on the number of books allowed. Further, books can be sent out again, so it is quite possible to use libraries. On this count the situation is good.

' Far more serious are the difficulties in getting books. I need a great many—I add below a list of those I have in mind at the moment—and getting them will involve considerable trouble. I don't know whether it will be possible to lay hands on them all. You may certainly count on the library of the Free Economic Society which issues books for home reading on deposit for two months, but its stock is incomplete. (I have already borrowed books from there and paid a deposit of sixteen roubles.) If I could use the university library, or the library of the scientific committee of the Ministry of Finance (through some writer or professor)—then the problem of getting books could be considered solved. Some books I shall have to buy of course, and I think that I shall be able to set aside a sum for this.

' Lastly, and this is the most difficult part: how to get the books to me. This isn't just a matter of bringing a couple of books or so. It is a case of collecting books from libraries periodically, over a long time, of bringing them and taking them away. (I think once a fortnight would be quite sufficient, or even once a month, if rather more books could be brought at a time.) I am not clear how this can be managed. Perhaps like this: find some porter, or yard-keeper, or commissionaire, or boy whom I could pay to go for books. Changing books, both from the nature of the job and the conditions of loan imposed by libraries, demands, of course, care and accuracy, so it is necessary to make proper arrangements.

Anna Il'inichna took upon herself the task of getting books from libraries and delivering them to Vladimir Il'ich in prison.

On the way to his place of exile, Lenin spent from 4th March to 30th April 1897 in Krasnoiarsk. During this time he used to go to the library of a certain Iudin, and he wrote to his mother from Krasnoiarsk on 10th March: '. . . Yesterday I came across Iudin's famous library here. He gave me a warm welcome, and

showed me his book collection. He is allowing me to work in it, and I think I shall be able to. (There are two drawbacks here: in the first place, his library is outside the town, though not far, about a mile and a half, and a pleasant walk. Secondly, the arrangement of his library is not finished, and I may be a burden to my host if I ask for books too often.) We shall have to see how this works out in practice. I think that the second drawback can be avoided. I am far from closely acquainted with his library, but by any standard it is a remarkable collection of books. He wrote about the same library in a letter of 15th March: 'The library has rather fewer books on my subject than might be expected from the size of the collection, but all the same it has material of use to me, and I am very glad that the time I am spending here is not altogether idle. I also visit the town library: I can read journals and papers there; they reach here eleven days late, and I still cannot get used to such ancient "news" . . .'

Reaching his place of exile at Shushenskoe, which letters and papers took thirteen days to reach, Lenin set out to make arrangements to use Moscow libraries even in this remote corner of Siberia.

On 25th May, 1897 he wrote from Shushenskoe to his sister in Moscow, Anna Il'inichna Elizarova:

'I have been thinking over the question of using a Moscow library: have you arranged anything in this direction, that is, have you been able to get access to any society library? It comes to this: if it would be possible to borrow books for two months (as in the St Petersburg library, and the Free Economic Society library), postage on them would not be so dear (a pound for sixteen kopecks, four pounds for sixty four kop; registered mail seven kop), and it would probably be more advantageous for me to spend money on postage and have a lot of books rather than spend considerably more money on buying comparatively few. In my opinion this would be a far more suitable arrangement for me; the only question is, can books be had on loan for so long (with a deposit, of course) from any good library.

'If you go abroad, tell me, and I shall send you details of books which can be obtained. Send me more second-hand book catalogues of all kinds (as well as library and book shop catalogues).'

In the winter of 1897 Il'ich wrote a letter to his family, from which it is clear that he had had some success.

Postal difficulties, however, prevented any wide use of libraries at Shushenskoe. In September 1898 Vladimir Il'ich received permission to go to Krasnoiarsk to have his teeth attended to. He

was delighted with the trip, and made preparations to take notes in Krasnoiarsk library while he was there.

On his return from exile, Lenin lived in Pskov. In a letter of 15th March 1900 he wrote to his mother: 'I often visit the library and go for walks'.

When he lived in London in 1902-1903, Vladimir Il'ich spent half his time in the British Museum, which has the richest library in the world, with an excellent service to readers. Il'ich also made wide use of London reading rooms, as is evident from his letter to his mother of 27th October 1902.

London has many reading rooms—single rooms, opening straight onto the street, without even seats, but simply reading stands and newspapers fastened to rods. The visitor takes a newspaper, and after reading it hangs it up in its place. These reading rooms are most convenient, and are much used all day long.

During his second stay abroad controversy flared up over certain philosophical questions, and Vladimir Il'ich became immersed in writing *Materialism and empiriocriticism*. In May 1908 he travelled from Geneva to London, where he stayed for a month expressly to work in the British Museum.

In Geneva, where we went in 1903, Il'ich spent day after day in the library of the Société de Lecture, where there was a great library, with excellent working conditions. The library took a large number of newspapers and journals in French, German and English. This library was a very convenient place in which to work. The members of the society—for the most part elderly professors—rarely visited the library. Il'ich had a study to himself, where he could write, pace from corner to corner, ponder on articles, and take any books from the shelves.

In Geneva Il'ich was also an assiduous user of the rich Kuklin Russian library, which was under the direction of comrade Karpinskii [see Karpinskii's reminiscences on p 58]. He subsequently used books from this library when he was living in other cities.

In Paris Il'ich mainly used the Bibliothèque Nationale.

In December 1909 I wrote to Il'ich's mother about his work in the library: 'For the past two weeks he has been rising at 8 o'clock and going to the library, returning at 2 p.m. For the first few days it was difficult to get up so early but now he is very contented and has begun to go to bed early'.

Il'ich also visited a number of other libraries in Paris, apart from the Bibliothèque Nationale, but did not find them very satisfactory. The Bibliothèque Nationale lacked catalogues for the most recent years, and there was a great deal of bureaucratic red tape in the issue of books. Generally speaking, librarianship

in France was riddled with bureaucracy. Regional city libraries consisted almost entirely of fiction, and to use them one had to produce a householder's guarantee that he would assume responsibility for the prompt return of books by his tenant. Il'ich judged cultural level by the way in which libraries were run; for him the position of libraries was indicative of standards of culture in general.

This is what he wrote to his mother on 22nd April 1914 from Cracow: ' . . . Working in Paris was unsatisfactory, the Bibliothèque Nationale is badly organised—and more than once we thought of Geneva, where work went better, the library was handy, and life was less nerve racking and confused. Of all places I have come across in my wandering I would choose London or Geneva, if both of them were not so far away. Geneva is particularly good for its general standard of culture and very comfortable way of life. Here, of course, one musn't mention culture—almost as in Russia: the library is bad, and grossly ill-equipped, but I scarcely have occasion to use it . . .'

When we moved from Cracow to Berne, Il'ich wrote to Mariia Il'inichna on 22nd December 1919: ' . . . The libraries here are good, and I am not too badly off for books. It is pleasant just to read, after a period of daily journalism. Nadia has an education library here, and is writing an educational work . . .'

On 20th February 1916 Vladimir Il'ich wrote to Mariia Il'inichna: 'Nadia and I are very pleased with Zurich; the libraries are good here'. And on 12th March 1916 he wrote to his mother: 'We are living now in Zurich. We came to do some work in the local libraries. We find the lake here delightful, and the libraries here are much better than those at Berne, so that we may stay longer than we intended'.

Libraries are admirably organised in Switzerland. Especially good is the exchange of books on inter-library loan. The learned libraries of German Switzerland have connexions with libraries in Germany, and even in war time Vladimir Il'ich managed to get through the library the books he needed from Germany.

Another feature is the excellent service to readers, the absence of any kind of bureaucracy, first rate catalogues, open access, and exceptional attention to readers' needs.

In the summer of 1915 we lived in the foothills of the Rothorn, in a very remote village and received library books there which came free through the post. The books were sent in containers to which was fixed an address label: on one side was written the address of the reader to whom it was being sent, on the other, the library's address. When returning the book, all

that was necessary was to turn the label round and put the container into the post.

Vladimir Il'ich was loud in praise of Swiss culture, and dreamed of what libraries would be like in Russia after the revolution.

Family reminiscences of V I Lenin (Goslitizdat, 1955) p 198-207

From 'Lenin—reader in the British Museum' by P Bogachev:

LENIN AND KRUPSKAIA arrived in London at the beginning of April 1902. In her reminiscences of this period, Krupskaja wrote: 'For a conspiracy, things couldn't have turned out better. They didn't ask for any documents in London then and it was possible to register under any name. We registered as the Richters. There was also the great advantage that, for the English, all foreigners look as alike as two peas and the landlady thought we were Germans all the time'.

The British Museum is a national museum. It was founded in the middle of the eighteenth century. The museum's public library is one of the biggest libraries in the world. At the beginning of the present century its shelves held several million printed books, tens of thousands of manuscripts, about a hundred thousand charters and scrolls and several thousand Greek and Roman papyri. Of special value were the collections of Russian revolutionary literature and also the publications of the period of the English and French bourgeois revolutions. V I Lenin remarked: 'Here there is an exceedingly rich Russian department. There are specialist assistants who search for newly published Russian literature and select from it. You have only to ask for a book and it is yours. The economics section is particularly full. They are merchants, you see. They have to trade with Russia and they have to know her . . . Yesterday they got me books in Russian which are not to be found either in Peter or in Moscow. They saw the light of day in Russia and then were confiscated, with the result that you won't find them in our libraries. And there's not a single library that does get them by exchange. The Englishman is not in the least concerned about how pompous young men from the chief department in charge of the press view this or that book. I don't mind telling you: for the sources in every language which I shall need in the near future, I cannot think of a better place to work than the British Museum library. Here the gaps will be fewer than in any other place'.

In order to register as a reader in the library, a recommendation from a well known person was required. There were several restrictions too, in the rules for the issue of books: you could

take home only those books which were not to be found in any other London library [sic!].

Soon after his arrival in London Vladimir Il'ich made efforts to obtain permission to use the British Museum reading room.

His letter of application reached the museum on 22nd April 1902 and was stamped 4332. In the top left corner of the application a note was made: 'admitted to the reading room 25th April, 1902'. Apart from the registration stamp, there was another stamp: 'notification of permission and rules for using the reading room sent 25th April, 1902'. Lenin attached to his application a letter of introduction from I H Mitchell, the general secretary of the General Federation of Trade Unions and member of the Independent Labour Party. Before the museum gives permission, it checks recommendations and establishes that the address of the recommender is correct. The check revealed that the street named by Mitchell had no entry in the London street directory. It had only just been built. Vladimir Il'ich's admission was held up but after a further explanation from Mitchell the director of the British Museum authorised the issue of a reader's ticket to Jacob Richter and he was notified of the decision on 29th April 1902.

On the same day Vladimir Il'ich applied for his reader's ticket, and signed his name against no A 72453 in the readers' registration book.

Having received his reader's ticket Lenin began to make daily visits to the British Museum reading room. He usually worked during the first half of the day (in 1902 and 1903), making the most of the great collection of reference literature contained in the reading room. Readers had full and free access to this collection. Most of all, he read, studied and made notes on the literature of the land question. In his preparations to rebuff the socialist revolutionaries, and the Russian and west European opportunists, who were battling with marxism on this question, Lenin studied the literature of many countries and worked through statistical material and investigations on the position of agriculture in Germany, France and Holland. He made notes on K Hubach's *Statistics of agricultural land tenure debts in Nieder-Hesse*, H Grohmann's *Dutch agriculture in 1890*, T Goltz's *Agrarian problems of today*, P Turot's *Agricultural returns 1866-1870*, and a number of others. He studied the report of the Chersonese Zemstvo book warehouse for 1900, and worked on V F Arnold's *Outline of agronomic technique and the economics of peasant agriculture in the Chersonese district*.

After studying and analysing critically a large amount of literature, Vladimir Il'ich wrote and published in 1902 and 1903 a series of articles in *Iskra*. At the same time he began to write a pamphlet *Towards rural poverty*. He prepared material for lectures and for a paper entitled *Marxist views on the agrarian question in Europe and Russia*; he prepared *Summary of and observations on E David's book*; and papers, read in November 1902 in Geneva and London, on the programme and tactics of the socialist revolutionaries.

His work on all this material involved to a large extent use of the resources of the British Museum.

In 1908, in Geneva, Lenin was engaged on the monumental work *Materialism and empiriocriticism*. For it he studied in less than a year a large number of Russian and foreign sources. It soon appeared that Swiss libraries did not have all the publications of the English physicists and philosophers which he needed. So, in May 1908, he came to London to work in the British Museum library, where, for more than a month, he studied primary sources and material in Latin, English, French and other languages. These were books on physics, natural science, history, philosophy and other disciplines and articles from American, English, French and German periodicals.

Today many libraries in the Soviet Union have friendly relations with the British Museum library. They regularly exchange books, periodicals and other publications, as well as exhibitions of literature, and organise visits and exchange ideas. All this furthers the expansion and consolidation of cultural cooperation between the peoples of the Soviet Union and England.

P Bogachev, ' Bibliotekar' ' (4) 1961 25-29

Bibliographical guide to Lenin and Krupskaja on librarianship

BY S SIMSOVA FLA

1 *General bibliographies of Lenin and Krupskaja:*

There is no comprehensive bibliography of Lenin or Krupskaja in English.

Lenin's work is covered by three good Soviet bibliographies and an early bio-bibliography in German: L V Bulgakova *Materialy dlia bibliografii Lenina 1917-1923* (Moscow, 1924); Lenin Library *Vospominaniia o V I Lenine . . . 1954-1961* (Moscow, 1963); L Levin *Bibliografiia bibliografii proizvedenii K Marksa, F Engel'sa, V I Lenina*; E Drahn *Lenin, V I Ul'janov: eine Bio-Bibliographie* (Berlin, second edition 1925).

The standard Soviet bibliography of Krupskaja is: Akademiia Pedagogicheskikh Nauk RSFSR *N K Krupskaja: Bibliograficheskii ukazatel'* (Moscow, 1959).

2 *Collected works of Lenin:*

The collected works of Lenin started publication in 1920. The first edition in twenty volumes was completed shortly after Lenin's death and two other editions followed before the second world war.

The best known edition is the fourth which has been translated into more than 108 languages: V I Lenin *Sochineniia* (Moscow, fourth edition 1941-1952).

The translation of the fourth edition into English by the Foreign Languages Publishing House in Moscow replaces the incomplete translation of an earlier edition by J Fineberg published during the 1930s: V I Lenin *Collected works* (Lawrence & Wishart, fourth edition 1961-1967).

The latest Russian edition is the fifth (1958-1965). Additional material of lesser importance has been collected by the Lenin Institute in *Leninskii sbornik* (Moscow, 1924-1959).

3 *Lenin on libraries:*

Five years after Lenin's death, his wife Nadezhda Krupskaja published in a small pamphlet a collection of his writings about

libraries: *Chto pisal i govoril Lenin o bibliotekakh* (Moscow, 1929).

Both the first edition and a subsequent reprint went quickly out of print, and a new enlarged edition was published in 1932. This contained additional documents by Lenin as well as Krupskaja's reminiscences and notes. A third enlarged edition came out in 1934 and a fourth edition followed shortly afterwards in 1939. The fifth edition dated 1955 was based on the third edition as the last one edited by Krupskaja. It included some further additional items, mainly government decrees signed by Lenin.

During her lifetime Krupskaja stressed the importance of collecting further documents about Lenin and libraries. Several new items, including examples of Lenin's book reviews and reminiscences about Lenin by the founders of Soviet librarianship, have been included in the latest edition under the new title: *V I Lenin O bibliotechnom dele* (Moscow, 1960). In spite of the effort on the part of the editors the collection is still not comprehensive and additional items are known to exist. The omissions have been listed in two critical articles by Abramov: K I Abramov 'O Leninskom nasledii po bibliotechnomu delu' *Bibliotekar'* (4) 1964 4-5; K I Abramov 'O sobiranii i izuchenii Leninskogo nasledstva . . .' *Biblioteki SSSR* (25) 1964 3-22.

4 *English translations of Lenin on libraries:*

There are no translations of Lenin in the library journals of the English speaking countries, though several publications acknowledge the debt of Soviet librarianship to Lenin as its ideological founder. Quotations from Lenin can be found in: E Dudley *Libraries in the USSR* (LA Essay No 247, 1953) p 19; P L Horecky *Libraries and bibliographical centres in USSR* (Indiana Univ, 1959) p 1, 76, 154.

This present volume contains the first translation of 'Lenin on libraries' into English, but it excludes some minor items, a list of which can be found on p 43.

5 *Collected works of Krupskaja:*

Krupskaja's collected works, not translated into English, are *Pedagogicheskie sochineniia* (Moscow, eleven volumes 1957-1963). Only one of her books has been translated into English, apart from her reminiscences of Lenin (*see below*). It is *Soviet woman* (Coop Publ Soc Bookniga, 1937).

6 *Krupskaja on libraries:*

A collection of Krupskaja's writings about libraries was published in 1957. It contains 138 articles, of which one has been

translated in this volume: N K Krupskaja *O bibliotechnom dele* (Moscow, 1957). One of Krupskaja's articles was translated into English during her lifetime and three were abstracted in *Library literature*: N Krupskaja 'Bolshevist index expurgatorius' *Living age* (322) 1924 26-28; *Library literature* 1936-1939 757, 855.

A survey of literature about Krupskaja and libraries has been published in a Soviet library journal: E Gorsh 'Vsia zhizn'—podvig' *Bibliotekar'* (2) 1964 17-19.

7 *Krupskaja on Lenin*:

Krupskaja wrote a number of reminiscences about Lenin. The main work, translated into English twice, is: N K Krupskaja *Memories of Lenin* (M Lawrence, two volumes 1930); N K Krupskaja *Reminiscences of Lenin* (Moscow, 1959).

The account of Krupskaja's first meeting with Lenin translated in this volume comes from Krupskaja's biography by her secretary Dridzo. This version of her encounter which Krupskaja as an old woman recounted to the Young Communist League is interesting to compare with the same episode as described in her earlier reminiscences: V Dridzo *N K Krupskaja* (Moscow, 1958).

The best Soviet biography of Krupskaja is S M Levidova and S A Pavlotskaia *N K Krupskaja* (Moscow, 1962). An English obituary of Krupskaja was published in the *Slavonic review*: July 1939, 202-204.

8 *Lenin as a user of libraries*:

There are many articles describing Lenin as a user of libraries. One article about Lenin as a reader in the British Museum has been translated in this volume as an example of this type of literature. There exists another article on the same subject: V M Semenov *Po Leninskim mestam v Londone* (Moscow, 1960) chapter 4.

Lenin's own library in the Kremlin has been well covered in various publications: Sh Manuchariants 'V biblioteke Vladimira Il'icha' *Bibliotekar'* (3) 1965 5-7; Z Subotina and others 'Biblioteka Lenina v Kremle' *Bibliotekar'* (4) 1959 9-13; Moscow. Kreml' *Biblioteka V I Lenina v Kremle: katalog* (Moscow, 1961).

9 *Lenin and the founders of Soviet librarianship*:

Lenin on libraries contains reminiscences about Lenin by Lunacharskii and Pokrovskii, of which Lunacharskii's article has been translated in this volume.

Lunacharskii's position as commissary of education made him the chief executive in library matters. Additional reminiscences

by him about Lenin, Krupskaja and the early days of Soviet libraries can be found in: A V Lunacharskii *O narodnom obrazovanii* (Moscow, 1958).

Pokrovskii was a marxist historian, whose views were condemned after his death as 'antimarxist and antileninist'. As the assistant commissary of education he was associated with the development of libraries. His reminiscences of Lenin appeared in: M N Pokrovskii *Oktiabrskaiia revoliuciia* (Moscow, 1929).

Obituaries of both Lunacharskii and Pokrovskii can be found in the *Slavonic review*: M P Price 'Anatole Lunacharski: a personal note' *Slavonic review* April 1934 728-730; A F Dobbie-Bateman 'Michael Pokrovski' *Slavonic review* July 1932 187-189.

10 Lenin and Rubakin:

Rubakin's main contribution to the development of Soviet libraries was in the field of bibliography and work with readers. Material about Nicholas Rubakin can be found in another volume in the present series: S Simsova (editor) *Nicholas Rubakin and bibliopsychology* (Bingley, 1968).

Lenin on libraries contains Lenin's criticism of Rubakin's main bibliographical work *Among books*. What Lenin wrote had a considerable influence on the attitude of the Soviets towards Rubakin, both in their high esteem for the basic plan of his bibliography and in their heavy criticism of his philosophical position.

Rubakin's own critical view of Lenin based, characteristically for him, on a psychological analysis of Lenin's personality has been translated in this volume, together with Rubakin's reminiscences of Krupskaja who in her youth taught at the same school for workers as his wife.

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